

*The  
Japanese Enthronement  
Ceremonies*

*with  
An Account of the Imperial Regalia*

*By*  
D. C. HOLTOM, PH. D., D.D.

*Author of  
The Political Philosophy of Modern Shintō*

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*Agents*  
TOKYO AND KYOTO



The Royal Progress in the Daijō Sai. Matting is unrolled before the Emperor and after he has passed this is rolled up behind him. Over the Emperor's head is held a great sedge umbrella.

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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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The Enthronement Ceremonies of the Emperor of Japan present an unusual opportunity for the study of Things Japanese. From the standpoints of art, ritual, government, history, sociology, religion and anthropology they are especially rich in materials that invite investigation. This book does not purport to be an exhaustive treatise on the Enthronement Ceremonies as they appear both in the present and in history. It has been written for the general reader in the hope that it may be found of value as a guide to the outline and the interpretation of the great ceremonies.

The rather free sprinkling of capital letters throughout the text calls, perhaps, for a word of explanation. One of the untranslatable elements of the Japanese language is in its use of honorifics. In places in the following chapters where the relationship seems to justify it, an attempt has been made to preserve something of the Japanese atmosphere by the use of capitals. Not infrequently the original honorific has been translated in this simple manner, rather than by some such clumsy device as "august," or "honorable."

Japanese treatises on the Enthronement Ceremonies are numerous. I am indebted to a considerable number of Japanese authorities, past and present, for guidance in various ways. Properly, I should give a list of these works. It is omitted here, however, in the thought



that an array of Japanese titles would tend to bewilder rather than assist the reader unfamiliar with the Japanese language.

Several friends have been good enough to read portions of the book and to aid in other ways in connection with the preparation of the manuscript. If any such friend should do me the honor of reading this introduction, he will know that I hereby publicly recognize his criticism and encouragement, even though I refrain from printing his name.

D. C. HOLTOM.

Tōkyō, Japan.

*August 1, 1928.*

*The  
Japanese Enthronement  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE IMPERIAL REGALIA

It is decreed by the Law of the Imperial Household of Japan that the enthronement ceremonies of the Emperor shall be held in the city of Kyōto. This involves a temporary transfer of the place of Imperial Residence. The official center of the empire is for the time being shifted from the bustling modern scenes of Tōkyō in the east to the more sedate atmosphere of Kyōto in the west, where century old history speaks from every stone and mountain. The progress of the Emperor from Tōkyō to Kyōto—there to make formal announcement to the Ancestral Spirits and to the Gods of Heaven and Earth and also to the world of the fact of his accession to the throne of his ancestors “in a lineal succession unbroken for ages eternal,” and there in the sacrament of the Daijō Sai to enter into spiritual communion with the great deities of the past—is a spectacle befitting the going forth of the off-spring of the Kami.

Near the head of this procession as it makes its way by horse and by train from the newer capital city to the older goes the Kashiko Dokoro, or the Place of Awe, which is the shrine of the sacred mirror of the succession rites. In its ancient dignity of structure and ornamentation it stands out against its modern setting of triumphal arches, brilliant banners, elaborate carriages and flashing military uniforms like an uncut gem against an intricate background of filigree. It is transported in a box-like palanquin called the Onhaguruma, or the Feather Carriage, borne on the shoulders of a band of stalwart youths selected by time honored custom from the village of Yase near Kyōto. These youths are accordingly called the Yase Dōji, that is, the “Yase Boys.” They are clad in ceremonial garb of green, and are preceded and followed by ritualists of high rank, robed in rich silks of blue, red, black, green and purple, and mounted on horses decked with trappings of red and gold. The Onhaguruma rests on two heavy beams of plain white wood and

is covered about the sides with brocade. The roof is of red lacquer and is surmounted by a golden ball that suggests the shape of the spherical dome of a stupa. Within is a portable shrine, and carefully concealed within this again, as too sacred for the eye of man to behold, is the mirror. The Onhaguruma precedes the Emperor himself. Meanwhile in the same procession are borne a necklace of odd shaped stone beads and a sword of ancient forging.

The Enthronement of the Emperor of Japan has its inner meaning in ceremonies connected with these three mystic emblems, the Yata Mirror, the Yasakani Curved Jewels and the Kusanagi Sword. These sacred objects make up the three-fold Yamato Regalia. In the current Sino-Japanese terminology they are called collectively the *Sanshu no Shinki*. Their title in Yamato Kotoba, that is the old Japanese speech, is *Mikusa no Kandakara*. Both terms mean "The Three Kinds of Divine Treasures." As originals and replica, they have been handed down from Emperor to Emperor since the very beginning of the long unbroken Japanese dynasty. They carry us back to the dim mythological origins of Japanese institutions, exactly how far back we cannot tell. According to the traditional official chronology they were first used in Imperial Enthronement Ceremonies when Jimmu Tennō, the first Emperor, ascended the throne in 660 B.C. This date is probably at least six hundred years too early. Even so, however, the Japanese succession rites in which the regalia play such an important part are among the most ancient ceremonies observed on earth to-day.

The oldest extant Japanese writings are the *Kojiki* written in 711-12 A.D., the *Nihongi* published in 720 A.D. and the *Kogoshūi* written in 806-7 A.D. In all cases these books are compilations incorporating the materials of documents written several centuries earlier, but now lost. The earlier sections of these documents were based in turn on a much older oral tradition. The three writings just named unite in carrying the founding of the Japanese Empire back to the determination of the great Ancestral Deities (Kami) to send down from Heaven on a mission of conquest the



The Passing of the Ark of the Sacred Mirror — the Kashiko Dokoro.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, *Taishō Yonen*.



grandson of Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the Sun Goddess. To this grandson, named Ninigi-no-Mikoto, the great Kami gave command saying, "The Luxuriant Land of Reed Plains<sup>1</sup> is a land over which our descendants shall rule. Do thou, Imperial Grandson, go and rule over it! And the Imperial Succession shall continue unbroken and prosperous, co-eternal with Heaven and Earth." Then they conferred on him the Yata Mirror, the Kusanagi Sword and the Yasa-kani Curved Jewels, and sent him down. This in the mythological account is the founding of the Empire of Japan.

The Japanese regalia are probably older than the dynasty itself. They are the visible sign and seal of the right to rule over the Japanese nation. Their possession is absolutely essential to the assertion of legitimate claim to the throne. Imperial Household Law itself makes this plain—"Upon the demise of the Emperor, the Imperial Heir shall ascend the Throne, and shall acquire the Divine Treasures of the Imperial Ancestors." To understand the enthronement ceremonies of Japan it is indispensable that one should know something of the history and significance of this three-fold regalia.

The word regalia is recognisable as the plural of the Latin form *regalis*, meaning "kingly" or "royal." It is used, however, in a modernized sense. In fact it does not appear in literature with its present-day significance until comparatively recent times. Although, as a scientific appellation the usage is modern, the thing that it describes is very old, so old, indeed, that the beginnings are lost in the far-off haze that envelopes the life of primitive man. Among the deposits of the Aurignacian and the Lower Magdalenian periods have been found perforated shafts of reindeer horn that have been conjectured to have once constituted the regalia of the chiefs of the Old Stone Age.

The term regalia is employed in modern terminology to indicate certain objects that are used in the accession rites of chiefs, kings or emperors whereby the right to rule is

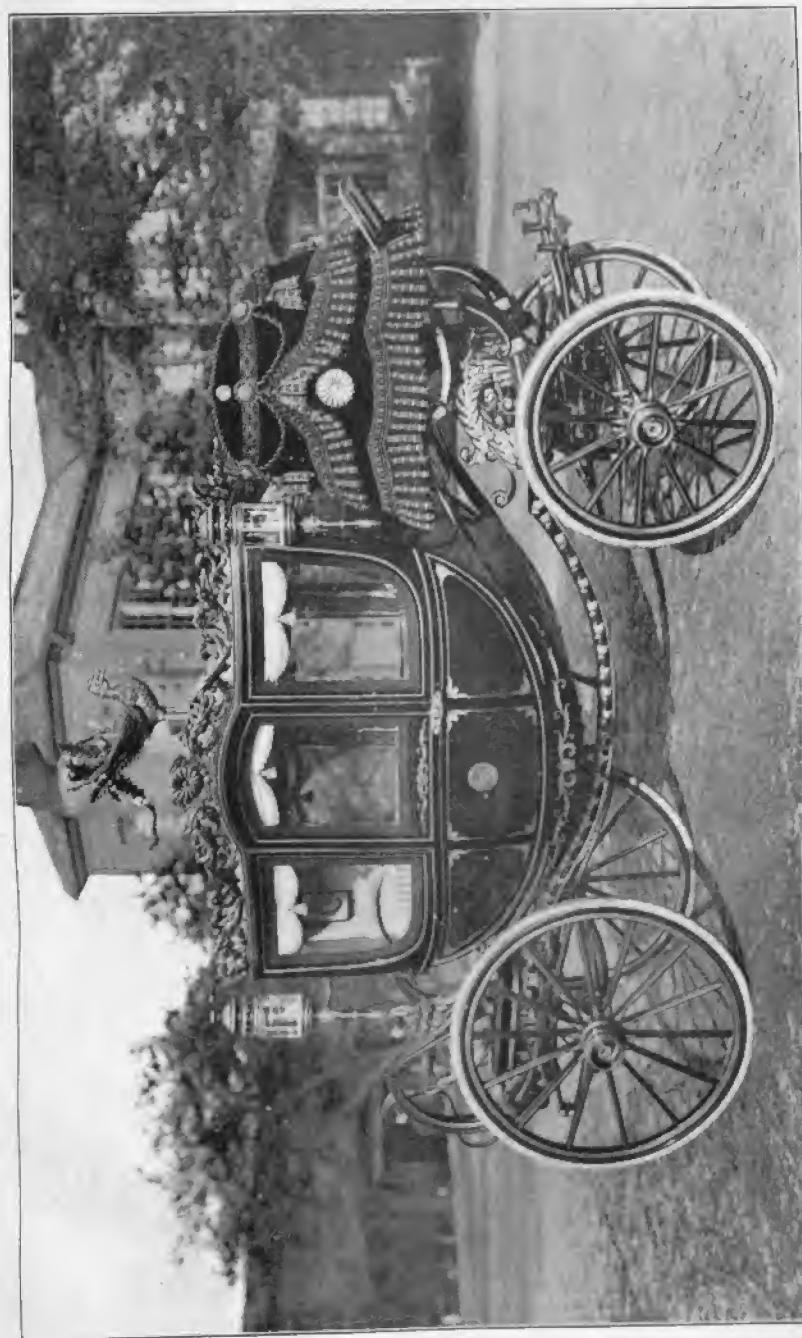
<sup>1</sup> Archaic name for Japan.

either conferred or symbolized. They are the insignia of royal authority. They appear all over the earth, and as just indicated, carry us back to the very dawn of human institutional history. They are as indispensable to the savage chief as to the civilized monarch. In fact the closer we get to primitivity the more needful they become as mysterious safeguards of the throne.

In form regalia are as diverse as the manifold civilizations and cultures in which they appear. War-clubs, batons, axes of stone or metal, cloaks, slippers, fans, feathers, strings of the teeth of animals, bones or teeth of the previous ruler, the head of the dead king covered with gold, a vertebra of the neck along with a nail and a lock of hair of the dead king packed into a crocodile's tooth, horses, umbrellas, skins of animals, rings, staffs, jewels, crystals, seals, chains of precious metal, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, crowns, books, scrolls, and a whole arsenal of swords—all these, and many other objects, are found among the regalia of different peoples. It is a list that reads like a catalogue of the treasures of a museum or like the contents of the witches cauldron in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The suggestion of witchery is not merely incidental.

Students of early human institutions have come to accept with a fair degree of unanimity an explanation of the origin of royal regalia in general that associates them with the technique of an ancient magic. In a primitive society the functions of the chief are magico-religious as well as political and social. He is sorcerer and priest as well as king, and by virtue of this complex position he is the center of an undifferentiated mixture of magic, religion and government. He is thus the administrator of magico-religious rites and ceremonies. By divers occult devices he makes rain, turns aside wind and tempest, restores the sunshine, controls rivers and springs, augments and guards the food supply, promotes the fertility of fields and flocks, heals sickness, brings success in war, and otherwise does a thousand and one odd jobs of magic that increase the wealth and happiness of his people.

What is here designated magic may be briefly explained



The Imperial Carriage of the Enthronement Ceremonies of Taishō Tennō. The carriage itself shows European influence. The phoenix at the top is Chinese.

Picture from *Tairai Shashinchō*, Taishō Yonen.

as a method of establishing control over nature, men or spirits by means of a technique in which causal relationship is assumed to exist between objects and events that are not in and of themselves so related. On the psychological side magic may be explained as the mistaken effort to secure control through the naive conclusion that association of ideas necessarily involves an objective causal association of the things for which the ideas stand. Magic thus appears as magic only to the mind that has transcended it. To one who moves within its realm it is indistinguishable from legitimate logical—what we call scientific—procedure. In the psychology of the sincere magic worker, objects or events that resemble each other are regarded as connected, and objects that have once been in close contact with each other or events that have appeared close together in time are regarded as causally related and as continuing to influence each other even after separation. A knife thrust through the image of the heart of an enemy kills the enemy; bits of the hair or of the nails of fingers or toes of another person may be used to work him weal or woe; birds that come in the spring control the weather—the examples are as diverse and as endless as are human thought and practice themselves. As a further matter that calls for special emphasis here, we shall find in the case of the Japanese regalia, that as magic working objects they were originally regarded as charged with a strange super-normal wonder-working power.

Data relating to the significance of the regalia, such as outlined above, have been utilized—particularly by the English anthropologist, Sir James G. Frazer—in an attempt to prove the magical origin of the kingly office itself. This writer tries to show that that individual ascendancy in leadership and wealth, which later developed into the authority of chiefs and kings, appeared first in human society as the product of the wonder-work of the sorcerer. The magic-worker was the first chief, and by the exercise of his occult powers he increased his possessions over his fellow men and strengthened his control over their thoughts and acts. The theory has much to commend it, but it is undoubtedly unsafe to attempt to go too far in this direction. The explanation



overlooks such all important factors in the creation of leadership as superior strength and skill, and unusual intelligence,—factors that reveal their efficacy even in a herd of wild cattle. It also errs in that it is a part of an untenable thesis that magic precedes religion in the genesis of human institutions. It is nevertheless certain that an important part of the office of king or chief in a primitive society was, and still is, magical. It thus not infrequently happens that the objects of the royal regalia begin their history as powerful fetishes. Far more than being mere insignia of royal authority, they are mysterious devices whereby their fortunate possessors are protected, and whereby the safety of the state is ensured. Accession to the throne in a primitive society is a great rite of passage, wherein elaborate precautions are required lest the potencies of the previous reign be lessened or even lost forever in the dangerous interim. Something must be found outlasting the brief lives of individual men whereby the *mana*, or the mysterious power, of the dynasty may be safely carried across the break of death. For the solution of this great problem man has turned to the magical operation of the regalia.

The Japanese regalia, as examples of the principle that the primary symbols of early kingly office tend to partake of a magical character, are deserving of special study, particularly in view of the fact that no more striking illustration of the principle just enunciated is to be found in the entire range of relevant data. We may turn, then, to the detailed examination of the *Sanshu no Shinki*. The mirror, as the most conspicuous and at the same time the most revered object of the regalia, deserves first consideration.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MIRROR

The oldest mirrors yet discovered in Japan are obtained from early burial sites. They show strong Chinese influence, being either of direct Chinese manufacture, or else made in Japan after carefully copied Chinese patterns. They follow the forms of the Chinese Han dynasty which flourished from 206 B.C. to 201 A.D. These facts support the conclusion that the Japanese learned mirror making from China at a date that roughly approximates the beginning of the Christian era. The exact date is unknown. These early continental mirrors probably first reached Japan by way of Korea. The first mirrors known to have been actually made in Japan by the Japanese were of a material which the early records call "white copper,"—*hakudō* in the original. Chemical analysis of this substance has identified it as an amalgam of copper and tin with a small portion of lead. References to iron mirrors begin to appear in the literary sources during the middle of the eighth century A.D. Glass mirrors were first brought to Japan from Europe toward the close of the Tokugawa Era. Mirrors made from soapstone or earthenware are sometimes exhumed from the ancient Japanese burial sites. These may once have had some ceremonial usage, now forgotten. It is possible, however, that a reflecting surface was produced on such stone mirrors by wetting them or by immersing them in water, as was done, for example, with similar mirrors in Polynesia.

As already stated, the sacred mirror of the Japanese Imperial Regalia bears the name of Yata Kagami, that is the Yata Mirror. Various conjectures have been made as to the meaning of Yata. There is no marked disagreement among Japanese scholars as to the meaning of *ya*. It is recognized as an archaic expression for a large and indefinite number which later attained the more precise meaning of "eight." The term Yata Kagami then means either a mirror with many *ta* or one with eight *ta*. The main difficulty lies

in determining the meaning of *ta*. One explanation takes the word in the sense of *te* (*ta*), "hand," in other words a hand's breadth or a span. The English span is nine inches, the Japanese, eight *sun*. The two units of measure are thus approximately the same. This would give us a mirror many spans wide, or, adopting the more definite meaning of *ya*, one sixty-four *sun* in diameter—something over six feet—which is rather extravagant when we remember that at one period of its history the mirror was kept by the Emperor on his couch-throne. Dr. Kenji Takahashi, one of the best known Japanese authorities on the history of the regalia, says in his book entitled *Kagami to Tsurugi no Tama* ("The Mirror, the Sword and the Jewels") that the Yata Mirror is about ten *sun*, approximately one foot, in diameter.

Another view regards *yata* as a contraction of *ya-ata*, and explains *ata* as an old root form that appears in such words as *ata-ma*, "head," and *hata*, "fin," with the primary significance of a projection or an appendage. The meaning would be, then, a mirror with eight corners, or one with many angles, perhaps a mirror with eight projecting bells. It is true that octagonal mirrors are not unknown in Japanese history, and mirrors with bells attached to the periphery are sometimes met with, but it is important to note that no mirrors of such form are found among the survivals of the very early period from which the sacred regalia mirror undoubtedly dates. All of the oldest mirrors are round.

A third explanation, and one that seems to have in it the largest degree of probability, derives *ya-ta* similarly from *ya-ata* or *ya-hata*, but explains *hata* in the sense of *heri*, meaning "rim," or "edge." According to this etymology the original must have been a mirror with eight rims or one with many edges. Mirrors with concentric rings cast in relief on their reverse faces are sometimes found in the excavation of ancient burial sites. The priests of the shrine of Ōyama-tsu-Mi-no-Kami at the town of Miya no Ura on the Island of Ōmi in the Inland Sea, famous for its antiquities, claim to have among their most ancient treasures a mirror embossed on the back with exactly eight of these

concentric rings. The Yata Kagami may be taken as a general name for this kind of mirror.

Sentiments of awe cluster about the sacred regalia mirror, partly because it has come down out of a remote and mysterious past, partly because of its relation to the Imperial power and the impressiveness of its symbolization of unbroken royal authority, and partly because of the influence of the belief that it was presented to an early ancestor of the race by the most revered personage of all Japanese story, the great Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami herself. But it is not for these reasons alone that the mirror is wonderful. To account for its mysteriousness fully we must explore a yet more primitive stratum of human lore. The final explanation lies in the marvel that the reflected image has always presented to the mind of unsophisticated man. Without a knowledge of the physical laws involved in the incidence and rebound of light waves, man has ever found the picture thrown back from the reflecting surface an object of reverence and fear. The faces and forms seen floating in the depths of pools and streams were spirits, or more marvelous still, they were the very souls of the beholders enticed by a strange sorcery from out their bodies and focused into visibility before their eyes. This mystery is older than the knowledge of the mirror, and was not solved by the invention thereof. It was rather rendered more vivid. When man learned to produce with his own hands a reflecting surface of polished stone or of metal, the old superstitions regarding water reflections were carried over to these new wonders and the mirror became the magical means par excellence for drawing the soul from out the body and making it apparent to sight. In reaching this idea primitive man has simply followed the plain evidence of his senses. Höffding in his *Outlines of Psychology* cites the case of a savage, who on looking into a mirror for the first time, cried out. "I gaze into the world of spirits." Beliefs regarding reflection souls are very old and very widely disseminated over the earth. A citation from the *Golden*

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Crawley in his article on *Mirror* in *Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (H.E.R.E.).

*Bough* will suffice to indicate something of the nature and diffusion of this belief.

"As some peoples believe a man's soul to be in his shadow, so other (or the same) peoples believe it to be in his reflection in water or a mirror. Thus 'the Andamanese do not regard their shadows but their reflections (in any mirror) as their souls.' When the Motumotu of New Guinea first saw their likenesses in a looking-glass, they thought that their reflections were their souls. In New Caledonia the old men are of the opinion that a person's reflection in water or a mirror is his soul."<sup>2</sup>

Such examples could be extended at considerable length. Crawley has called attention to the fact that many terms for soul point to this same association with reflections. "The Melanesian *atai* ('soul') means 'reflection,' and the same meaning belongs to many terms among the Indonesians."<sup>3</sup>

In view of comparisons to be made below with a similar belief among the Japanese, we should note carefully in the next place a development of the above superstition into the notion that the mirror has power to abstract and retain the soul. I cite some of the evidence which Crawley has collected.

"There is a pool in Saddle Island river (Melanesia) into which any one who looks dies; the malignant spirit takes hold of his life by means of his reflection in the water. The Zulus have a similar terror of looking into any dark pool; a beast therein will take away their reflections. The Aztecs supposed that to see one's reflection in water wherein a knife had been placed meant a stab to the soul, and the Galelarese forbid their children to look in mirrors, which will take away their beauty. Manu said (in rules for a *snataka*): 'Let him not look at his own image in water.' The old Greeks had the same maxim; to dream of seeing one's self reflected foreboded death."<sup>4</sup>

This old belief that the soul may be drawn out of the body by the mirror and retained therein helps us in understanding certain practices affecting mirrors that have survived in European and American civilization, for example, the custom of turning the mirror face to the wall or covering it with a cloth after a death has occurred. Frazer's explanation of the origin of this practice is illuminating: "It is feared that the soul, projected out of the person in the shape of his reflection in the mirror, may be carried off by the

<sup>2</sup> Frazer, J. G., *The Golden Bough* (single Vol. ed.), p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> Art. "Mirror," (H.E.R.E.)

<sup>4</sup> Crawley, *op. cit.*

ghost of the departed, which is commonly supposed to linger about the house till the burial."<sup>5</sup> For the same reason a sick person should avoid looking in a mirror, lest the soul already weakened by sickness and uncertain of tenure by the body, should be abstracted and carried away by some lurking ghost or demon.

But we must return to the field of our immediate study. A belief in reflection souls was prevalent in Old Japan. In order that we may make comparison with this Japanese material to best advantage we should note a further development of the reflection soul idea in the form of the belief that the faces and forms of persons intimately related to the beholder, or scenes and events affecting the beholder for good or ill, are imaged in the mirror under proper conditions. It is this idea that underlies the ancient practice of divination by reflecting surfaces, for which purpose water pools, ink pools, mirrors and crystal balls have all been used. In the Chinese book *Chikyozu*<sup>6</sup> cited in the *Hyakkwa Dai Jiten*, it is said, "If one wishes to know the place where treasure exists, (he should) take a large mirror and in the night time look at the image reflected therein. If a light appears in the midst of the mirror, something [a treasure] exists beneath."<sup>7</sup>

A form of this same belief is seen in the idea that certain sacred mirrors reflect the likenesses of the gods themselves. Such a view prevailed among the old Greeks. Pausanias mentions a certain temple near Megalopolis within which was a sacred mirror, regarding which he says, "Anyone who looks into this mirror will see himself either very dimly or not at all, but the images of the gods and the throne are clearly visible." On the Japanese side, we find in the Kogoshūi important evidence showing how this same belief regarding the reflection-souls of deities furnished the original background of folk-psychology out of which special regard for the regalia mirror developed. When the two celestial ancestors, Amaterasu-Ōmikami and Takami-Musu-

<sup>5</sup> Frazer, *op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> 地鏡圖

<sup>7</sup> *Hyakkwa Dai Jiten*, art. *Kagami*.

<sup>8</sup> Pausanias, VIII, XXXVII, 7, cited H.E.R.E., 8, 697.



bi-no-Kami, presented their Imperial Grandson with the Divine Regalia and sent him down to rule over Japan, they declared:

"Whenever you gaze upon this sacred mirror, you behold our sacred selves, reflected in it. So regarding it, you will find it holy, and must therefore reverently worship it, ever keeping it beside your couch and in the privacy of your own room."<sup>9</sup>

In the Nihongi it is Amaterasu-Ōmikami alone who confers the mirror upon her offspring, and the close association of mirror and sun in other passages in the old literature favors the view that the Nihongi tradition is the original one. The mirror which Amaterasu-Ōmikami gave to the Heavenly Grandson was a device whereby she was able to project her soul out of her body and make it available to her offspring as a protecting genius. The Heike Monogatari says of the sacred Yata Mirror that it was given to the Imperial Grandson by the Sun Goddess "that the reflection of her features might be preserved therein, and that when her descendants looked on them they might see as it were herself."<sup>10</sup> The story of the Matsuyama Kagami introduces the idea of communion between a daughter and her dead mother by means of a mirror in which the reflection-soul of the latter appeared to the former.

This regard for the mirror as the seat of a Kami largely accounts for its worship among the early Japanese. It is a most important factor in understanding the prominence of the mirror in Shintō in general, and in particular accounts for the fact that at Ise the Sun Goddess is still believed to enter the Yata Kagami when summoned there by proper rites. The Yata Kagami is not simply the symbol of the sun. From the beginning it carried the soul of the sun. The plain evidence of the senses that the mirror gave off light as did the sun in heaven, and that, held beneath the direct rays of the sun, it sparkled with dazzling brilliancy, would have been enough to convince the early Japanese that the mirror had mysteriously captured the spirit of Amaterasu-

<sup>9</sup> Katō and Hoshino, *Kogoshūi*, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. 49, Pt. 1, p. 347.

Ōmikami. We can understand from this how it comes to pass that the mirror is itself a Kami.

A final conception which the Japanese have shared with other peoples is that of the mirror as a protective device for keeping away evil spirits. The underlying belief here is that in the mirror the true nature of man or demon, however much disguised in outward appearance, is clearly shown. In the Chinese book, *Hōbokushi*,<sup>11</sup> as quoted in the *Hyakkwa Dai Jiten*, there is a passage to the following effect: "When the Ten-Thousand-Things grow old their spirits all have power to disguise themselves in human form and deceive people. However, they are unable to alter their true forms (which appear) in the midst of mirrors. Therefore, to prevent evil spirits from coming near (a mirror) of nine inches or more in diameter should be used." This same superstition either had an independent origin in Japan or was early transplanted from China. When Yamato-Takeru-no-Mikoto went to subdue the barbarian Yezo he placed at the very prow of his boat a large mirror." The explanation of the device is apparent from the above passage. The mirror protected the occupants of the boat against the unknown approach of evil spirits in disguise. The same explanation applies to the mirrors commonly found just within the Oratory in front of the Main Sanctuary of Shintō shrines. This external mirror must be distinguished from that which is frequently utilized as the *Shintai* or "Divine Body" of the shrine and in which the Kami take residence. The latter mirror is carefully concealed within the inner recesses of the shrine, while the former is open to the plain view of all who approach. The outer mirror is a protective device. It is there not so much that the worshippers may see the mirror, but that the mirror itself may see all that come near. Thus evil spirits, unable to disguise themselves before it, will avoid the sacred precincts. Mirrors with the image of Buddha on the reverse side have from ancient times been hung up in Japanese homes as protections against evil and misfortune. There is also a custom of hanging *mamori-*

<sup>11</sup> 抱朴子

<sup>12</sup> See Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 206.

*bukuro*, or charm bags, on the mirror-stands. Thereby the magical protection of mirror and charm are associated together to supplement and reinforce each other.

It is from the standpoint of the magical capacity of the mirror to produce light that its part in the ceremony of the recall of the Sun Goddess from the Rock Cave of Heaven is to be understood. This familiar story should be noted with particular care at this point, since it purports to give the mythological origin of the Yata Mirror. We follow the account in the *Nihongi*.

After this Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto's behaviour was exceedingly rude. In what way? Amaterasu-Ōmikami had made august rice-fields of Heavenly narrow rice-fields and Heavenly long rice-fields. Then Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, when the seed was sown in spring, broke down the divisions between the plots of rice, and in autumn let loose the Heavenly piebald colts, and made them lie down in the midst of the rice-fields. Again, when he saw that Amaterasu-Ōmikami was about to celebrate the feast of first-fruits, he secretly voided excrement in the new palace. Moreover, when he saw that Amaterasu-Ōmikami was in her sacred weaving hall, engaged in weaving the garments of the gods, he flayed a piebald colt of Heaven, and breaking a hole in the roof-tiles of the hall, flung it in. Then Amaterasu-Ōmikami startled with alarm, and wounded herself with the shuttle. Indignant at this, she straightway entered the Rock Cave of Heaven, and having fastened the Rock-door, dwelt there in seclusion. Therefore constant darkness prevailed on all sides, and the alternation of day and night was unknown.

Then the eighty myriads of Gods met on the banks of the tranquil River of Heaven, and considered in what manner they should supplicate her. Accordingly, Omohi-kane-no-Kami, with profound device and far-reaching thought, at length gathered long-singing birds of the Eternal Land and made them utter their prolonged cry to one another. Moreover, he made Ta-jikara-Wo-no-Kami to stand beside the Rock-door. Then Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto, ancestor of the Nakatomi-no-Muraji, and Futo-dama-no-Mikoto, ancestor of the Imibe-no-Obito, dug up a five-hundred branched True Sakaki tree of the Heavenly Mount Kagu. On its upper branches they hung an august five-hundred string of Yasaka Curved Jewels. On the middle branches they hung a Yata Mirror.

On its lower branches they hung white soft offerings and blue soft offerings. Then they recited their liturgy together.

Moreover, Ama-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto, ancestress of the Sarume-no-Kimi, took in her hand a spear wreathed with Eulalia grass, and standing before the door of the Rock-cave of Heaven, skilfully performed a mimic dance. She took, moreover, the true Sakaki tree of the Heavenly Mount

Kagu, and made of it a head-dress, she took club-moss and made of it braces, she kindled fires, she placed a tub bottom upwards, and gave forth a divinely inspired utterance.

Now Amaterasu-Ōmikami heard this, and said:—"Since I have shut myself up in the Rock-cave, there ought surely to be continual night in the Central Land of Fertile Reed-plains. How then can Ama-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto be so jolly? So with her august hand, she opened for a narrow space the Rock-door and peeped out. Then Ta-jikara-Wo-no-Kami forthwith took Amaterasu-Ōmikami by the hand, and led her out. Upon this the Gods, Nakatomi-no-Kami and Imibe-no-Kami, at once drew a limit by means of a bottom-tied rope and begged her not to return again (into the cave).<sup>13</sup>

This story in the form in which the *Nihongi* has preserved it bears evidence of having worked over more primitive data with the materials of a later and more advanced civilization. For example, tiled roofs could never have been a part of the original setting. Thatch was the best that the earliest Japanese culture could boast. Nevertheless the primary elements of the account give the impression of great age. We have here an excellent example of mythological rationalization. An old ceremony for restoring the sunlight is being accounted for in mythological terms. The ritual itself is undoubtedly much older than the explanation thereof. Underlying the myth we can easily detect a strong motive of fear arising out of some form of obscuration of the sun. Three explanations have been offered, namely, a solar eclipse, obscuration of the sun by storm clouds and the daily setting of the sun in the west. There is reason for believing that the early Japanese called the sinking of the sun below the horizon the retirement of Amaterasu-Ōmikami to her Rock-cave, but it is impossible to believe that a restoration rite of the elaborateness of the one just examined was of daily or even frequent occurrence. The prominence of the storm god, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, in creating the situation that caused the withdrawal of the Sun Goddess is favorable to the hypothesis of a prolonged darkening by heavy storm clouds, but it is pertinent to observe that in their ignorance of the real cause of a solar eclipse the early Japanese would necessarily be apt to attribute any un-

<sup>13</sup> Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, pp. 40-45.

usual or prolonged darkening of the sun to the mischief-making of Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. On the other hand, the vividness with which the account preserves the memory of intense darkness supports the theory of a total solar eclipse. The Kogoshūi says that it was a "pitch darkness," so deep that no one could discern between day and night. Whether obscuration by storm clouds or by the shadow of the moon, the story depicts a ceremony that was brought into being by the combined force of a fear that the sun would not come back and of an instinct that something must be done to bring it back.

The ceremonial probably represents a customary procedure in meeting such a crisis that had developed throughout a long period of time. The orthodox interpretation of the myth represents Amaterasu-Ōmikami as being influenced by two of the great forces that have always swayed the female heart, curiosity and love of beautiful gifts. It is true that the Nihongi as rendered in Aston's translation given above speaks of "white soft offerings" and "blue soft offerings," but it is hardly legitimate to conclude from this that the device created for the purpose of bringing Amaterasu-Ōmikami out of the cave was originally regarded merely as an offering. The "soft offerings" were streamers of white bark-cloth and of blue hemp. They represent the colors of fair weather, white clouds and blue sky, and are part of the magic. The cocks are undoubtedly introduced for the same reason. It was a matter of experience that their crowing brought the dawn, and in an emergency such as that which the ceremony was created to meet they would help bring back the sun. The mirror was used in the rite because it was a sun image, indeed the myth expressly recognizes it as such. The original purpose of introducing a sun image in the paraphernalia of the ceremony was to make light by imitative magic. In the Kojiki account the mirror is represented as an actual Kami, not as an offering, and the whole description seems to be that of a ceremony in which the full return of Amaterasu-Ōmikami was accomplished by the magical attraction of a mirror steadily displayed before the emerging sun—"Then Ame-no-Uzume-no-Mikoto spoke,

saying, 'We rejoice and are glad because there is a Kami [i.e. the mirror] more illustrious than Thine Augustness.' While she was thus speaking, Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto and Futo-tama-no-Mikoto pushed forward the mirror and respectfully showed it to Amaterasu-Ōmikami, whereupon Amaterasu-Ōmikami, more and more astonished, gradually came forth from the door and gazed upon it."<sup>14</sup> The appearance of bonfires in the story likewise suggests a magical light-making ceremony. A similar explanation of the meaning of the jewels will appear later in the discussion.

It is in this story that we find the mythological origin of the Yata Mirror of the Japanese Imperial Regalia. The tradition that a mirror which had once been used to bring back the sun had passed into the possession of the Sun Goddess and was thence handed on to the first human ancestors of the Imperial Line may mean either that a magic mirror of the old light-making ceremony was taken over into the regalia because of its talismanic potencies, or that an original regalia mirror because of its special mystic efficacy was customarily made use of in the light ritual. In either case we have here in the Japanese field an excellent example of the original magical nature of regalia emblems.

The most direct literary evidence that the original associations of the Yata Kagami were magical has yet to be presented. According to the Kogoshūi, the Emperor Sujin (97-30 B.C., following the traditional chronology) in the fifth year of his reign, when ruling from the Mizukaki Palace in Shiki, "began to feel uneasy at dwelling on the same couch and under the same roof, beside the Mirror sacred to Amaterasu-Ōmikami and the Herb-quelling Divine Sword, and being greatly overwhelmed by their awe-inspiring divine influence," he ordered them removed to the village of Kasanui in the district of Yamato where a new holy site was prepared for them. The Emperor took the precaution, however, of having replica of the originals made which were kept near his person just as were the old. After recounting how this was done, there follows in the Kogoshūi a passage which affords unobstructed view of the folk-beliefs that

<sup>14</sup> Chamberlain, *Kojiki*, p. 58.



surrounded the regalia in the beginning. The text reads: "The new mirror and sword are the identical sacred emblems which the Imibe family offer to the Emperor as the divine insignia at his enthronement ceremony, which protect the legitimate sovereign against hostile evil powers."<sup>12</sup>

No modern anthropologist could set forth the underlying theory of regalia with greater clarity than do these old words of the *Kogoshūi*—the regalia are sacred insignia secured by the new ruler at his enthronement whereby his succession is legitimized, and at the same time they magically protect their possessor against evil powers.

A careful gleaning of Japanese literature would reveal numerous stories of the miraculous powers of the sacred regalia mirror. Buried in the ground by the Imperial Princess Takuhata, the Virgin Priestess of Ise, it strangely revealed its presence by a bright rainbow that appeared above its place of concealment. When, in the Battle of Dan-no-Ura, soldiers of the victorious Genji army attempted to secure a surreptitious peep into the chest wherein the replica mirror was enshrined they were overpowered by a dazzling light and driven mad.

Very early in its history the original Yata Mirror found a permanent place of enshrinement in a spot where it has ever remained in peace, beyond the reach of the storms of the centuries. In the twenty-sixth year of his reign the Emperor Suinin, who according to the traditional chronology came to the throne in the year 29 B.C. as the son of Emperor Sujin mentioned above, transferred the original mirror and sword to a shrine built for them on the banks of the Isuzu River in Ise. The Sword eventually found its way to the Atsuta Shrine near Nagoya. A brief statement of its history will appear in the following chapter. The mirror has ever remained enshrined in the Holy of Holies of the Dai Jingu of Ise as the most sacred material object of all Japan. Mirror worship has an important place in Shintō.

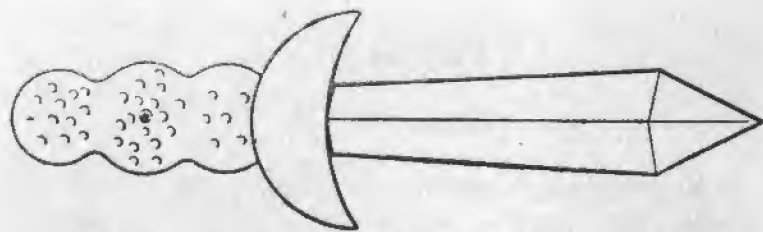
<sup>12</sup> Katō and Hoshino, *Kogoshūi*, p. 35.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE SWORD

From the very beginning the Japanese made their own swords. References to warlike implements made both of metal and of stone appear side by side in the earliest literary records. The followers of Emperor Jimmu, whom the traditional chronology dates in the seventh century B.C., were armed with stone weapons resembling hammers and probably identical with those unearthed in numbers by archaeologists, but even earlier in the mythological period than Jimmu Tennō references to true swords of metal appear. It is very difficult to date these references with accuracy, but it is fairly safe to say that the Japanese have been acquainted with the art of metal sword making for close to two thousand years. Their oldest metal swords were of iron and no connection can be traced between them and the ancient swords of China, although it is true that swords of Chinese manufacture made of copper and of iron early found their way into Japan. The knowledge of metal sword making antedates even the legendary period of Japanese history.

The great swords of Old Japan were personified and even deified. They were named just as men were. In certain cases they were given the title of Kami as an indication of the awe-inspiring, divine attributes which they possessed. We read in Japanese literature of wonderful swords that came and went of themselves through space, and that even crossed the sea, of swords that healed sickness and answered prayer, of swords that punished profanation with disease and death, of swords that leaped miraculously from their scabbards to fight for their possessors, and that mysteriously protected their owners from all forms of danger, of swords that were gods, and that gave birth to gods. Great shrines have been built to swords and the deities which they represent. Some of these shrines have survived as the centers of living cults even to the present day.



Sketch of Ancient Sword. Swords of this shape are commonly found among Votive Offerings at Shintō Shrines.

Especially noteworthy in the old literature are the marvels wrought by the Sacred Regalia Sword. From numerous examples two are selected for introductory consideration. The fame of the Kusanagi sword spread far and wide, even to countries beyond the seas. Knowledge of its extraordinary virtues thus came to the ears of the King of the Korean country of Shiragi. Carried away by covetousness he planned theft. In the year 668 A.D., by the aid of a priest named Dōgyō, he succeeded in stealing the sword, but before Dōgyō could get far on his way, it flew from him and returned of itself to its shrine at Atsuta. After a few days Dōgyō tried again and this time got so far in his machinations as to actually board ship with the talisman in his possession and set out to sea. Then came a great storm. The ship made no progress. In fear Dōgyō tried to throw the sword overboard but it clung to him like a guilty conscience. Finally Dōgyō was forced to carry the sword back to Atsuta and surrender himself up for execution. The second incident concerns the Emperor Temmu. In the year 686 A.D. this Emperor fell sick and there seemed no hope of his recovery. Then says the Nihongi, "It was ascertained by divination that the Emperor's disease was owing to a curse from the Kusanagi sword." It seems that some years earlier the Emperor had removed the sword from its shrine and had kept it near his own person. A disease from which he was never to recover was popularly regarded as punishment meted out by the sword itself for this sacrilege.

The sacred sword of the Imperial Regalia bears two

titles: *Kusa-nagi no Tsurugi*, or "Grass-mower Sword," also translated "Herb-quelling Sword," and *Ama no Murakumo no Tsurugi*, or the "Gathering-clouds of Heaven Sword." The later title is the older of the two. The traditional origin of these names will be explained presently.

The commonly accepted explanation of the prominence of the sword in Shintō ceremonials rests on its importance in the social, or more specifically, the military history of Japan. It was inevitable that a race of warriors who lived by the sword should revere and deify the emblem of their power. The sword thus became the symbol of the soul of the samurai, and as such the object of his worship. The assumption here is that ceremonies and symbols tend to express those interests and activities that are of most importance to human society itself. The assumption is undoubtedly correct. It is certain, for example, that the gods did not learn to carry swords until after the practice had attained a certain degree of prominence among men. It is needless to repeat the old fallacy that the anthropomorphic personifying tendency is weak in early Japanese thinking, for it is true in Shintō as elsewhere that the gods were projections of human wishes, that they were pictured in human forms, domesticated so to speak, and equipped with human clothes and weapons as well as with human passions. Thus the importance of the sword in Shintō rites, including the enthronement ceremonies, may rightly be taken as an emphatic witness of its importance to the Japanese people themselves. But this is not the whole story.

The experiences that went into the making of the major deities of old Shintō were not wholly, nor indeed primarily, limited to the field of human social relationships. Great forces of nature also played a significant rôle. In the life stories of the greatest of the gods we constantly see how cosmic phenomena are being interpreted in terms of the materials of domestic and social life. This is conspicuously true of the divine sword of Shintō. The majesty and the awe of the lightning have contributed to the significance of the sword of the Japanese Imperial regalia. In the lightning flash ancient man saw laid bare in the sky the terrible

striking weapon of the gods. The conception here met with must be almost as old as human thought itself. Before this weapon of the gods was a sword it was a stone hammer, before it was a hammer it was perhaps a wooden club or a bit of unshaped rock. Scattered widely over the earth in stories of celestial clubs, staffs, celts, thunderbolts, spears and swords we find the materials for reconstructing an important chapter in the story of how old attitudes of awe in the presence of the unknown forces of nature survive throughout long periods of social evolution.

This development lies back of the Kusanagi Sword of the Japanese Imperial Regalia and has had profound influence upon ideas regarding it. This sword is sacred not only because of great age and memorable associations in the social life of the Japanese people. It is all this and much more. At a very remote period it had added to it the mystery and power of the lightning flash. Little wonder that Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto who originally found it declared that it was an awesome sword, too precious to be retained by himself, and forthwith sent it up to heaven to be the property of the Heavenly Shining Great Deity herself.

The fact that the regalia sword was discovered, according to the original myth, by Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, the storm god of the early Shintō pantheon, should afford us more than a hint as to its original nature. In considering, then, more in detail the reasons for associating the Kusanagi Sword with lightning, we may note in the first place that the story of its discovery in the tail of a great serpent is full of evidence showing how conceptions born of primitive experience with storm have attached themselves thereto.

We follow the Nihongi again. The citation given below takes up the account just after Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, for violent misdemeanor, has been cast out of Heaven.

"Then Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto descended from Heaven and proceeded to the head-waters of the River Hi, in the province of Idzumo. At this time he heard a sound of weeping at the head-waters of the river, and he therefore went in search of the sound. He found there an old man and an old woman. Between them was set a young girl, whom they were caressing and lamenting over. Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto

asked them, saying:—'Who are ye, and why do ye lament thus?' The answer was:—'I am Earthly Deity, and my name is Ashi-nadzuchi. My wife's name is Te-nadzuchi. This girl is our daughter, and her name is Kushi-nada-hime. The reason of our weeping is that formerly we had eight children, daughters. But they have been devoured year after year by an eight-forked serpent, and now the time approaches for this girl to be devoured. There is no means of escape for her, and therefore do we grieve.' Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto said:—'If that is so, wilt thou give me thy daughter?' He replied, and said:—'I will comply with thy behest and give her to thee.' Therefore Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto on the spot changed Kushi-nada-hime into a many-toothed close-comb, which he stuck in the august knot of his hair. Then he made Ashi-nadzuchi and Te-nadzuchi to brew eight-fold *sake*, to make eight cupboards, in each of them to set a tub filled with *sake*, and so to await its coming. When the time came the serpent actually appeared. It had an eight-forked head and an eight-forked tail; its eyes were red like the *akakagachi*,<sup>1</sup> and on its back firs and cypresses were growing. As it crawled it extended over a space of eight hills and eight valleys. Now when it came and found the *sake*, each head drank up one tub, and it became drunken and fell asleep. Then Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto drew the ten-span sword which he wore, and chopped the serpent into small pieces. When he came to the tail the edge of the sword was slightly notched, and he therefore split open the tail and examined it. In the inside there was sword. This is the sword which is called Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi ("Grass-mower Sword").

"In one writing it is said:—Its original name was Ama-no-Murakumo-no-Tsurugi (Gathering-clouds of Heaven Sword)."

A note in the text of the Nihongi gives the following explanation of the older name:

"It perhaps received this name from the clouds constantly hanging over the place where the serpent was. In the time of the Imperial Prince Yamato-dake its name was changed to Kusanagi-no-Tsurugi."

The story concludes with the words:

"Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto said:—'This is a divine sword. How can I presume to appropriate it to myself?' So he gave it up to the Gods of Heaven."<sup>2</sup>

This story of the discovery of the regalia sword is known to every Japanese school boy. It is told and retold in the current text-books, sometimes apparently as history, sometimes without comment. In its main outlines it is immediately recognizable as one of the twice-told tales of universal mythology. Aston in a foot-note to his translation

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps a kind of snake. See Aston, *Nihongi*, I, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Aston, *Nihongi*, pp. 52-3.



has already suggested a comparison with the Greek story of Perseus and Andromeda. Close similarities have been found among widely separated peoples. The underlying meaning is not difficult to see. The story is a nature myth, and like most myths, full of illogical primitive reverie, but nevertheless based on certain clearly identifiable human experiences. It embodies the stern struggles of early agriculturists with devastating storm. The father in the myth rightly says that he and his wife are earth deities. They are the lands of the primitive farmers. Their very names suggest this—*Ashi-na-dzuchi* (*tsuchi*) and *Te-na-dzuchi*, "Foot-earth" and "Hand-earth," perhaps to be understood as the fields of the early farmers painfully worked by hand and foot. Their daughters are crops, eight of them, that is many, produced in succession season after season, and season after season devoured by the great serpent. The last crop-daughter, who typifies all who have gone before her, is Kushi-nada-hime, or Kushi-inada-hime. *Kushi* may mean "strange" or "marvelous." It may also mean "comb." This latter sense perhaps suggested to the early myth makers the incident of transformation into a comb and concealment in the hair of Susa-no-Wo. *Ina*, or *ine*, is "rice"; *da*, or *ta*, is "paddy-field"; *hime* is "daughter" or "maiden." The entire meaning then is "Marvelous-Rice-field-Maiden." She was the food of a race of rice growers. We can understand from this the source of the tone of weeping in the story. It was first of all in the lamentation of the peasants themselves.

The great devouring serpent is the storm dragon, many times familiar in Oriental symbolism. He extends above the hills and the valleys. His eyes are fiery red. In his tail he bears a sharp sword. The original name of this sword is *Ame-no-mura-kumo-no-itsurugi*, "The Gathering-clouds of Heaven Sword." The Nihongi preserves the correct tradition when it says that this name was given because of the clouds that constantly gathered above where the serpent was. The regalia sword, then, was born as lightning in the tail of the storm dragon.

There exists convincing literary evidence that the in-

terpretation just outlined rests soundly on the groundwork of primitive Japanese folklore. The Heike Monogatari has preserved the correct ancient tradition of the origin of the regalia sword—"It was called the Gathering-clouds of Heaven Sword, and the reason for this name was that when it was in the body of the serpent black clouds always covered it, and so it was called 'cloud-cluster' sword. Now wind went forth from the tail of this great serpent and rain fell from its head. It was the Dragon-king of the winds and waters that descended to the earth."<sup>3</sup>

Nothing could be more explicit than this. It leaves no room for doubt as to the nature of the primitive experiences that lie behind the myth of origin of the regalia sword. The sword, like the mirror, finds its prototype in a bright and overmastering heavenly light. The significance of this fact will become more apparent perhaps when we arrive at conclusions relative to the deep-seated and ancient belief that the Japanese Imperial Dynasty is *Hitsugi*, that is a "Light Succession."

To be sure there is apparent incongruity in the fact that in the myth of the origin of the regalia sword the storm dragon is killed by the storm god. The difficulty is not as serious as it may seem to be at first glance however. As a matter of fact we probably have here two or more storm myths of diverse origin somewhat clumsily worked into one. Certainly the storm god element is much older than the agricultural element. It is probable that an independent myth of crop destruction by the storm dragon has, by the inevitability of psychological association, attracted and captured the more primitive storm god, Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. Our main interest, however, is in the story as an account of the origin of the sacred sword of the Imperial Regalia.

The image of the dragon with gleaming eyes and fiery breath, writhing in the storm clouds, with forked lightning passing from his body, is a familiar one in Japanese art and story. The deity of Mimura hill, mentioned in the Nihongi, was a great serpent that gave forth rolling thunder

<sup>3</sup> *The Heike Monogatari*, T.A.S.J., Vol. 49, Part I, page 347.

and whose eyes flamed with fire. His name was Ikadzuchi, "Thunderbolt."

In the summer of 1921 the Namiyoke Shrine of Tsukiji, Tōkyō, placed on public exhibition one of its ancient art treasures, in the form of a large wooden sword mounted into a wooden base carved in the shape of a dragon's tail. The explanation of the priests in charge was that this was the sword taken from the tail of the eight-headed serpent by Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto. Down the entire length of the wooden blade, colored in a bright red, ran a vivid lightning flash. The representation was at one and the same time a serpent's tail, a sword and a flash of lightning. The symbolism of this art was true to the old traditions of experience with storm that originally created the myth of the origin of the sacred sword of the Imperial Regalia.

Lightning is elsewhere represented in early Japanese literature as the sword of the gods. The Japanese Sky-father, Izanagi-no-Mikoto carried a weapon that has been identified as a mythological projection of the same primitive experiences as those that—for example—armed the Roman Jupiter and the Greek Zeus with thunder-bolts and the Teutonic Thor with a celestial hammer. The old Japanese lightning god, Futsunushi-no-Kami is pictured in the pages of the Kojiki and the Nihongi as a heavenly sword, and even today in modern Shintō he is worshipped under the same form.

Shintō mythology and symbolism here lead us back to a situation identical with that which we meet in the study of similar materials of other cultures, namely, a vantage point from which we can gauge the depth to which experiences with thunder and lightning storms molded the thinking of primitive man. Nothing in all nature is comparable for vivid reality and awe-inspiring dreadfulness to the fierce flashing of the lightning and the roaring of the thunder against the background of swirling black storm clouds and heavy rain. It was a fact, terribly audible and impressively visible, that a mighty dragon was writhing in the sky, or that the gods were crying aloud in their wrath and striking about in their anger. And in splintered tree,

devastated dwelling or stricken companion savage man had irrefutable evidence that a mysterious club, a stone hammer, or a sword, had leaped out of the sky to deal sternly with him and his possessions.

This idea is reflected in the Shintō conception that the Kusanagi sword is the symbol and the dwelling place of the *aramitama* or "server spirit" of the goddess of light, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, while the mirror is the dwelling place and symbol of her *nigimitama*, or her "gentle spirit." In other words, according to this idea, the great light-giving divinity of the world manifests herself in two diverse modes, one the beneficent aspect of the sun, the other the severe and terrible aspect of the lightning. This is one of the primary distinctions to be made between the Shrine of the Mirror at Ise and the Shrine of the Sword at Atsuta.

The vicissitudes of the long centuries of Japanese history have little affected the original regalia sword. We have already had occasion to note how, in the time of Emperor Sujin, the Yata Mirror and the Kusanagi Sword were taken from their places on the royal couch-throne and enshrined at the village of Kasanui in Yamato. Then in the next generation the Emperor Suinin once more moved them to a new shrine on the banks of the Isuzu River in Ise. It has also been observed that ever since that time the mirror has remained secure in the inviolable sanctity of the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise. In the days of Keikō Tennō, who according to tradition ruled from 71 to 130 A.D., the famous hero-prince, Yamato-Takeru-no-Mikoto, when dispatched against the Eastern Barbarians borrowed the sword from its Ise shrine in order to secure its mighty talismanic protection while on a dangerous mission. It was during this expedition that the incident occurred which gave to the sword its name of Grass-mower or Herb-queller. The Prince was enticed by the barbarians to enter alone onto a grassy prairie, whereupon the enemy kindled a ring of fire about him that threatened to destroy him. Then with the divine sword he quickly cut the dry grass nearby and, starting a back fire, saved himself from death. One version of the story says

that in this emergency the sword miraculously leaped from its scabbard and of itself mowed down the herbage about the Prince. From this arose the title Kusanagi—*kusa*, "grass" or "herbage," and *nagi* from *nagu* "to cut" or "to mow."

On his return, Yamato-Takeru-no-Mikoto deposited the sword with the custodian of the Atsuta Shrine in Owari and then set out on a new expedition against the rebels of Ibuki. But now deprived of the mysterious protection of the divine sword, he fell seriously ill, and on reaching Nobono of Ise, died. For a brief time the sword was laid on his empty couch where it worked miracles in favor of those who prayed to it. It was soon restored to its shrine, however.

The sacred sword was never thereafter returned to Ise, but has ever remained enshrined at Atsuta as the "Severe Spirit" of Amaterasu-Ōmikami. Sword worship also has an important place in Shintō rites.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE JEWELS

The origin of the Yasaka Curved Jewels is lost amidst the vague unfolding of early Japanese tradition. The knowledge of jewel making and bead cutting is apparently a primitive Japanese possession, antedating all written Japanese history. The pictures that unfold before us in the pages of the Kojiki and the Nihongi are bright here and there with the color of the *magatama*, the characteristic "curved jewels" of Japan. This fact clearly indicates the ancient Japanese love of personal adornment. The old Sky-father, Izanagi, wore a necklace of jewels about his neck. The Sun Goddess had them entwined in her hair and about her wrists. Her famous brother, Susa-no-Wo, likewise wore them in his hair and about his neck. The Nihongi mentions that maidens attending their looms were adorned with "jingling wrist jewels." More rarely they were worn about the ankles. This literary evidence is supported by archeology. The *haniwa*, or clay images which were interred in the sepulchres of the early Japanese rulers as substitutes for human sacrifice, commonly show representations of strings of jewels about the neck, more rarely about the wrists or in the hair.

Already a large number of these ornaments of Old Japan have been brought to light. They are of various shapes, sizes and colors, but in general may be classified under three forms, spheroidal, cylindrical, and the kidney shape of the *magatama*. There are marked exceptions to these standard shapes, however. The spheroidal form is slightly flattened along one diameter and pierced for stringing through this shorter dimension. The cylindrical type is perforated along the line of the major axis, and in the earlier usage was commonly strung alternately with the *magatama*. Strings of stone beads employed in Shintō rites today are made up in this same manner with *magatama* and *kudatama*, that is, with curved and cylindrical

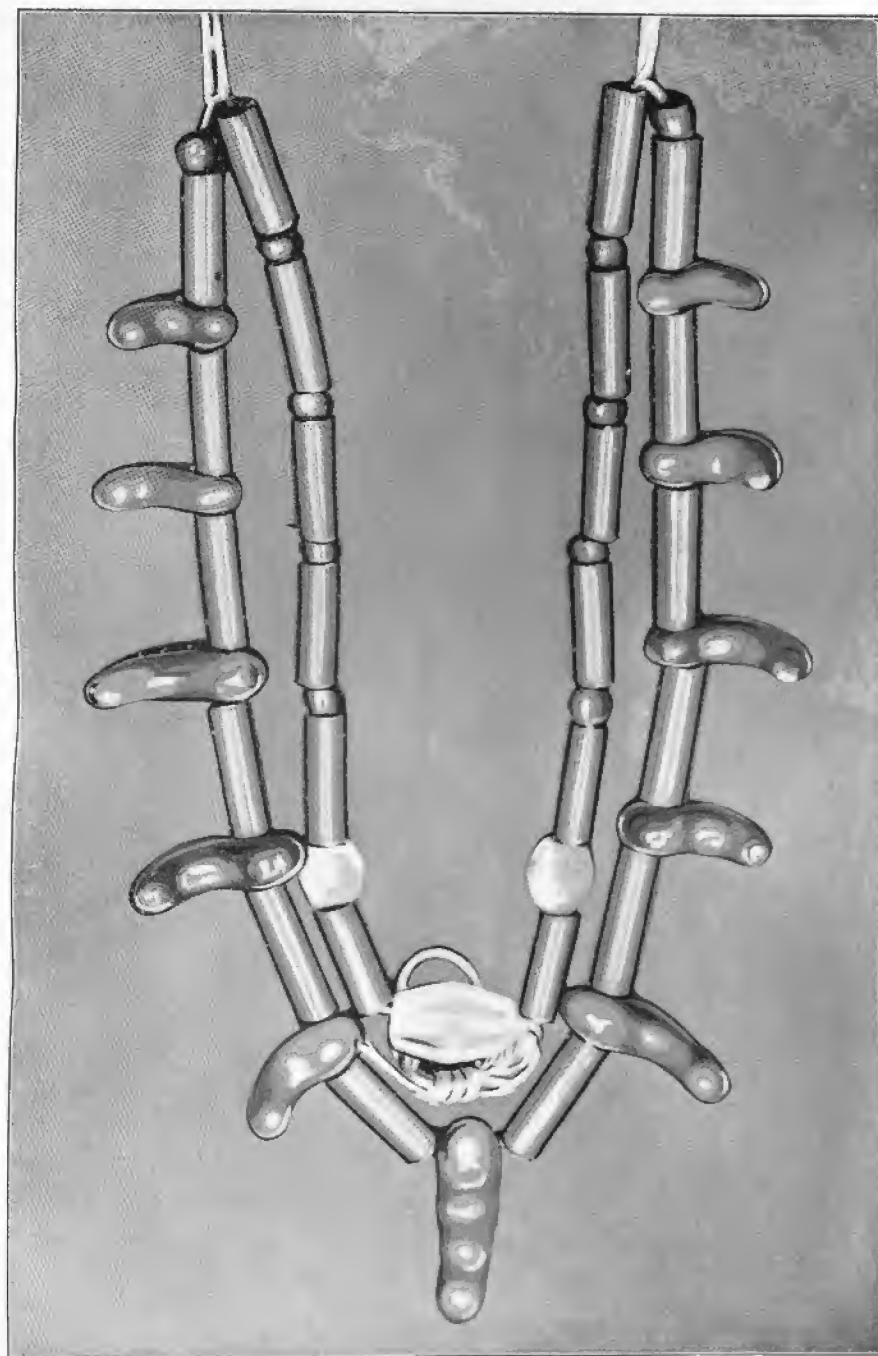


beads alternating. The *magatama* itself is perforated, generally at one end, which is slightly enlarged for the purpose. *Magatama* on exhibition in the Imperial Museum of Tōkyō vary in length from approximately one-half of an inch for the smaller varieties to specimens nearly three inches long.

The materials from which the *magatama* were made were as diverse as were their sizes. Agate, jasper, chalcedony, topaz, amethyst, jade, amber, pagodite, serpentine, steatite, talc, baked red clay and fossil wood were all utilized. Porcelain and glass were occasionally worked into objects of this form. Glass was known in Japan as early as the fourth century A.D. Rare specimens of *magatama*, made of a mixture of copper and gold or of copper and silver, have been discovered. As may be inferred from the great variety in materials, the colors of the *magatama* range all the way from the red of carnelian to the violet of amethyst at the other side of the spectrum.

The regalia jewels appear in the Nihongi with a shorter and a longer title. The shorter title, which is the one usually employed, is *Yasakani no magatama*. *Magatama*, as already indicated means "curved jewel." The name is thus descriptive of form. It signifies the rounded, kidney-shaped objects frequently found in the older Japanese burial sites, as well as elsewhere, and commonly used as personal ornaments by the early ancestors of the race. The element *Yasaka* is variously interpreted. It may mean "ever very bright," or "ever flourishing," or again, it may mean "eight feet (long)," in other words, very long. The meaning first given is to be preferred. *Ni* in the title is difficult. It is written with an ideogram which itself means jewel, and is taken by the Japanese commentators to refer to the color of these particular *magatama*—green, perhaps red. There is a certain amount of evidence in favor of the color green. The shorter title would mean, then, "Ever Very Bright Green Curved Jewels."

The longer title runs thus: *Yasaka no magatama no ihotsu misumaru no tama*. *Ihotsu* means literally "five



A String of Curved Jewels—*Magatama*.

hundred." It here stands for a large number and may, perhaps, best be translated "manifold." *Mi* is an honorific for which there is no appropriate English translation. *Sumaru* means "collected" or "assembled," that is to say, gathered together on a string in a manner suitable for hanging about the neck or wrist. The complete significance of the longer title then would be: "Ever Very Bright Curved Jewels, The Manifold August Assembled Jewels." The ideogram indicating color does not appear in the original of the longer title.

The data just reviewed serve to indicate the extent to which *magatama* were used as personal ornaments in ancient Japan. The mere fact of a wide-spread social usage, however, will not suffice to explain the fetishistic powers which were believed to reside in the jewels. For this we must seek a deeper cause. That the *magatama* were regarded as having such power is well attested by the literary evidence.

A noteworthy statement of the talismanic powers of the regalia jewels is set forth in the *Heike Monogatari*, as follows:

"Now the Jewels, the Sword and the Mirror are the Three Sacred Treasures of Our Imperial Throne; and the Jewels have been handed down from the Age of the Gods, and are kept in a marked casket as a talisman to protect each generation of Sovereigns. And this casket is never opened, so that no one has seen what is in it. The Emperor Go-Reizei-In (1046-1068 A.D.) for some reason or other tried to open the casket, but when he took off the lid immediately a white cloud arose from within it. After a while the cloud returned again as it was, and Kii-no-Naiji replaced the lid and tied it down again. Nippon is a small country, but in this thing it surpasses even great ones. If the Emperor himself, lord of the mightiest powers, was not permitted to see it, how should ordinary people do so, much less any others of lesser rank still?"<sup>1</sup>

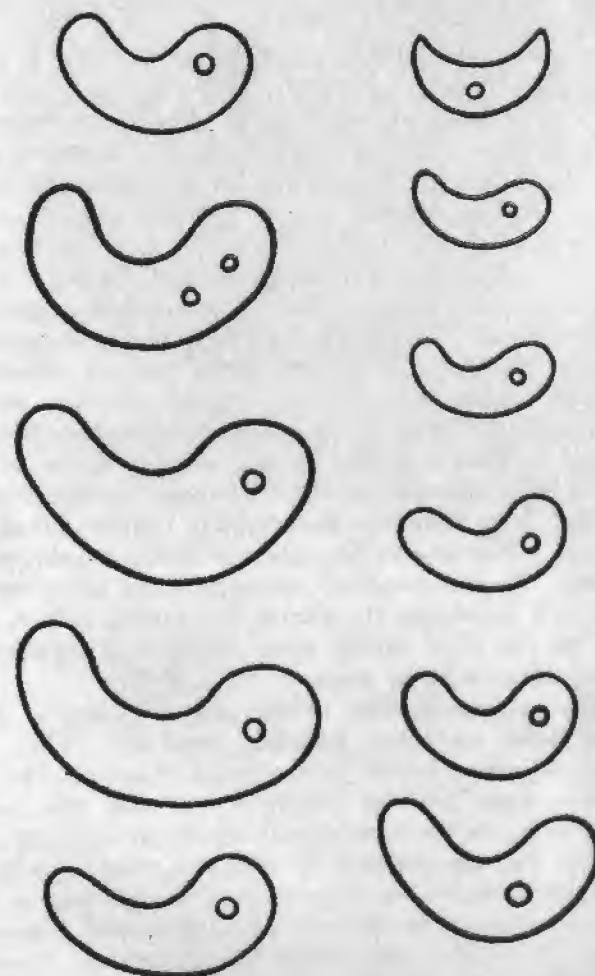
A survival into the present of the old supernatural associations of the *magatama* may be seen in the fact that in the Lûchû Islands the female medium, called by the name of *norokumoi*, still wears *magatama* about her neck.

<sup>1</sup> *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, First Series, Vol. 49, Pt. 1, p. 343.

We know also that from a very early date the investment with the prerogatives of royal office in Japan was accompanied by the handing over of *magatama*. This fact is indicated not merely in the account already noted, of the presentation by the Sun Goddess of the three regalia emblems to Ninigi-no-Mikoto when the latter was sent down from Heaven to found the Japanese Empire, but also appears in connection with a story which at least in the mythological sequence is even older than the Ninigi-no-Mikoto episode. After the Sky-father, Izanagi-no-Mikoto, has brought into being the Sun Goddess, the Moon God and the Storm God, the Kojiki record makes him exclaim, "I, begetting child after child, have at my final begetting gotten three illustrious children." Saying this—to continue the citation from the Kojiki—"at once jinglingly taking off and shaking the jewel-string forming his august necklace he bestowed it on the Heaven-Shining-Great-August Deity, saying, 'Do Thine Augustness rule the Plain-of-Heaven.' With this charge he bestowed it on her."<sup>1</sup>

The transfer of authority from the Sky-father to the Sun Goddess was plainly regarded as incomplete without the simultaneous handing over of the *magatama* necklace. It is difficult to see how the myth could have developed in this particular manner without a formative social practice behind it.

As already stated, the probable meaning of *Yasakani no magatama* is "Ever Very Bright Green Curved Jewels." The descriptive elements in the name possibly have reference to the appearance of the substance from which certain such jewels were made. This reference both to brightness of appearance and to curved shape may have other associations, however. There is a certain amount of fairly good evidence in support of the hypothesis that the *magatama* represents the crescent moon,<sup>2</sup> and that in the primitive situation that produced it, it was regarded as filled with the strange powers that emanated from the moon. The final



Magatama.

Sketched from originals in Tōkyō Imperial Museum.

<sup>1</sup> Kojiki, Texts, T.A.S.J., Volume X, Supplement, p. 41.

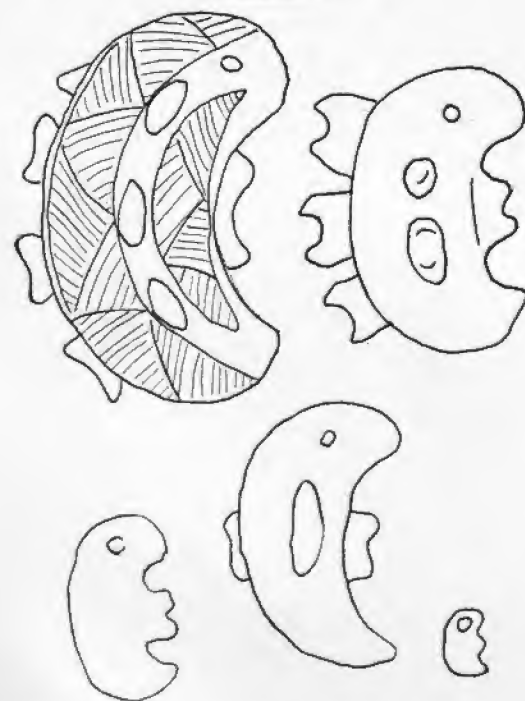
<sup>2</sup> This is not inconsistent with the fact that the early Japanese represented the full moon by the mirror. See Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 26.



explanation of its use as a protective talisman in the regalia is in sympathetic magic.

In the first place the shape itself strongly suggests the new moon. The current theory of the origin of the *magatama* is that the prototype is to be found in the tooth of some wild animal, pierced at the larger end preparatory to being placed on a string or thong and attached to the human body as a trophy expressive of self-esteem at the conquest of a savage beast and as means of securing to the wearer a magical transference of the strength and cunning once resident in the wild animal. The theory was first propounded by Dr. Shōgorō Tsuboi, and has been widely accepted by Japanese scholars. It has the advantage of offering a reasonable explanation of the magical qualities of the *magatama*, and also of having various confirmatory parallels in other cultures. Similar trophy amulets made of the teeth of wild animals are not uncommon in savage communities. They have been discovered in Europe, Africa and elsewhere. The practice prevails still among the savages of Formosa. In the primitive philosophy that underlies the use of such ornaments the wearer is regarded as both protected by the spirit of the slain animal and enlarged in personal prowess by its *mana*.

The magical qualities of the *magatama* can as easily be explained on other grounds, however. The most decisive objection to the tooth-trophy theory is that the standard shape of the *magatama* is not that of a tooth. It is, on the other hand, almost an exact crescent. It is true that the ordinary form has one end slightly enlarged and rounded but this can be best explained as due, not to an attempt to reproduce a tooth-shaped prototype, but merely to the requirements of perforation necessary to arranging on a string. In those *magatama* in which the place of perforation approaches the center of the stone, the two ends tend to become symmetrical. Such types suggest nothing so much as the crescent moon. They can hardly be mistaken for anything else. In Babylonian religious symbolism a kidney-shaped object, which Jeremias has al-



ABOVE—Ancient Mirror, reverse side.

BELOW—Magatama, of a variety known as "Child-bearing Curved Jewels" (*Komochi Magatama*). Small magatama are attached to the large mother stone. Note the close approximation of the mother stone to the shape of a kidney, or a crescent.

Diagram from *Kōkōgaku Zasshi* (Archaeological Journal), July, 1928.

ready suggestively compared with the Shintō *magatama*, was the emblem of the new moon.<sup>1</sup>

Another noteworthy point is to be found in the important place which the *magatama* holds in the light-making ritual which the early literature represents as having been performed at the time of the withdrawal of the Sun Goddess to the Rock Cave of Heaven. This evidence strongly supports the inference that the *magatama* was originally a moon symbol. According to the Kojiki the *magatama* of the Imperial Regalia first appeared as part of the artifice for enticing the Sun Goddess out of the cave. As already explained, the myth of the withdrawal of Amaterasu-Ōmikami and the ceremony wherewith her return was effected are plainly based on an obscuration of the sun. This catastrophe could only be met by means of an elaborate ceremonial that included powerful means. The significance of the mirror in this connection is unquestioned. The old records say that it represented the sun. Are not the jewels necessarily in consonance with this symbolism? If so the significance of this old Japanese light ritual become doubly clear. The offended goddess was magically recalled by the display of the emblems of the two great light-giving bodies of heaven, the sun and the moon.

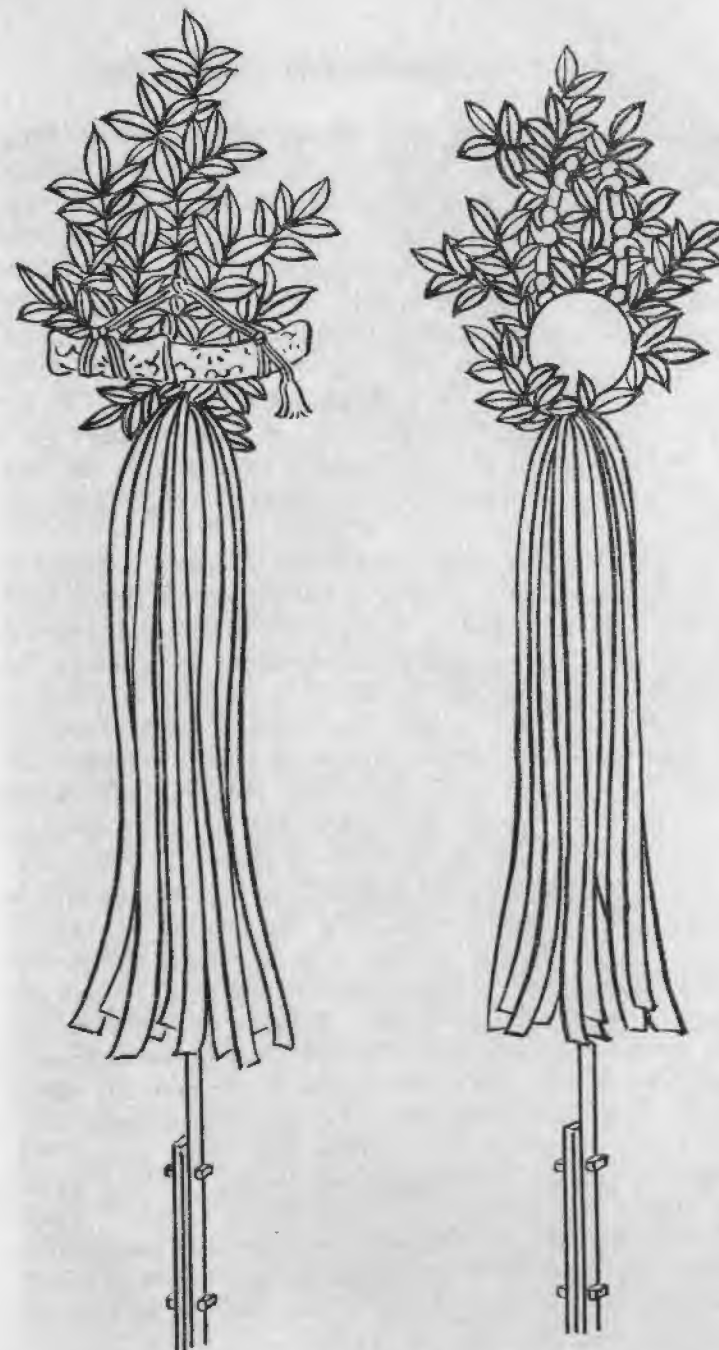
A third item of evidence pointing to a moon origin for the *magatama* is to be found in the use of jewels in Old Japan as devices wherewith to magically control the tides. The Nihongi mentions a tide-flowing jewel and a tide-ebbing jewel; that is, jewels which when dipped over the ocean mysteriously caused the waters either to flow in or to recede. The original story here referred to recounts the incidents of a quarrel between Hiko-hoho-demi-no-Mikoto and his elder brother over a fish-hook, and, in explanation of certain aid which the Sea-god rendered the former against the latter, says, "He (the Sea-god) further presented to him

<sup>1</sup> In this connection Dr. Alfred Jeremias in his *Allgemeine Religions Geschichte*, p. 199 says, "Auch die räthelhafte gebogene Edelsteinkugel, die die Gestalt einen Niere hat (verdoppelt bildet sie das Wappen von Korea), möchte ich als kosmisches Zeichen deuten, und zwar wiederum als Mondsymboll unter Hinweis auf die euphratensische Astralsymbolik, die den Mond in einer bestimmten zunehmenden Phase als „Niere“ deutet."

(Hiko-hoho-demi-no-Mikoto) the jewel of the flowing tide and the jewel of the ebbing tide and instructed him, saying:—'If thou dost dip the tide-flowing jewel, the tide will suddenly flow, and therewithal thou shalt drown thine elder brother. But in case thy elder brother should repent and beg forgiveness, if, on the contrary, thou dip the tide-ebbing jewel, the tide will spontaneously ebb, and therewithal thou shalt save him!'<sup>5</sup>

The above story suggests that the early Japanese ancestors had already at a remote period of their history observed a connection between the tides and the moon. This deduction is rendered practically certain by a brief passage in one of the Nihongi variants which informs us that after the Sky-father, Izanagi-no-Mikoto, had created the Sun Goddess, the Moon God and the Storm God, the father commanded his second illustrious child, "Do thou, Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, rule the eight-hundred-fold tides of the ocean plain." This gives us fairly definite information regarding the early existence of a belief that the moon ruled the tides. We also have before us evidence of the prevalence of a belief that certain jewels controled the tides. The evidence supports the conclusion of a connection between moon and jewels. Evidently at an early period the Japanese forefathers attempted to set up a control of the ocean tides by means of an image of the moon. To be sure the myth does not say that the devices used were *magatama*. They were jewels (*tama*) of some sort, perhaps spherical, perhaps crescent shaped. Nevertheless the evidence does lend support to the inference that jewels in some form, were used as moon emblems, in an ancient ceremonial technique for directing the movements of the tides.

In the fourth place, a certain amount of corroboration of the theory here advanced may be derived from argument based on the name of the creator of the regalia jewels, according to the mythology. The origin of certain *magatama* worn by Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto and later presented to the Sun Goddess, as well as the origin of those used in the light



A Mirror, a Sword and a String of Jewels are elevated on poles with streamers and Sakaki attached, and placed before the Shrines at important Shintō Festivals.

<sup>5</sup> Aston, *Nihongi*, Vol. I, p. 94.



ritual performed at the time of the withdrawal of Amaterasu-Ōmikami to the Rock-cave of Heaven, is attributed by the Nihongi to a being called Ama-no-Akaru-dama, "The Bright Jewel of Heaven," who was the child of Izanagi, the Sky-father. What is this bright jewel of heaven, born of the great sky, if not the moon? The Kogoshūi gives the name of the original possessor of the regalia jewels as Kushi-Akaru-Tama-no-Mikoto, that is, "Strange Bright Jewel Deity," or perhaps "Comb Bright Jewel Deity." If the latter rendering may be relied on, we may perhaps go a step further and find in the name a reference to the new moon under the figure of the crescent shaped Japanese comb.

A further point which may be noted briefly is found in the practice which still obtains at the important festivals of modern Shintō of mounting replicas of the mirror, the sword and the jewels on long poles and elevating them before the sanctuaries of the Kami. Is this a ceremonial survival of an old idea that these objects are cosmical symbols and as such properly lifted toward heaven on poles? Students of Japanese mythology will recall that Amaterasu-Ōmikami after her creation by the Sky-father and the Earth-mother, was sent up into the sky by the Pole of Heaven. The elevation rite which has survived in Shintō to the very present is probably older than the myth, and the existing practice of raising aloft the jewels and the sword on poles before the shrines gives support to the conclusion that these objects are likewise cosmical representations. Beneath the emblems are hung streamers which are definitely known to represent clouds. Emblems of the moon and of the sun are raised aloft on banners in connection with the enthronement ceremony proper held in the Shishin Den (also called the Shishiiden) of the Kyōto Imperial Palace. These particular devices undoubtedly have a Chinese origin. Their ready adoption into the Japanese enthronement ceremonial, however, may possibly be accounted for by the pre-existence of an identical symbolism on the Japanese side in the form of the *magatama* crescent and the mirror.

A final argument in support of the interpretation of

symbolism given above, and one that applies to all three emblems alike, appears in the fact that the early mythological statement of the assignment of authority to the Kami of Heaven and Earth makes a three-fold allocation of spheres of dominion among the same three deities whom we have found to be typified by the regalia emblems. The deities whom the foregoing analysis has discovered to have been, according to mythology, the original possessors of the regalia are the very ones in whom are vested the primitive rights of sovereignty. Accompanying this is the further fact that when, according to tradition, the Japanese empire was founded by the determination to send the Imperial Grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, down onto the islands to subdue them and reign over them, this tripartite authority was reunited and expressed in the transfer to the Imperial Grandson of the three regalia emblems. These two facts would appear to belong together. In other words, the handing over of the three-fold regalia to Ninigi-no-Mikoto finds meaning in what must have been a common belief during the period in which the myth came into existence, that each one of the emblems expressed the sovereign rights of one of the three realms into which the dominions of the Heavenly Kami were formerly divided. These three realms were those of sun, moon and of storm, each one of which had its own visible symbol. The argument is perhaps worth a little more detail.

Following the Nihongi and the Kojiki accounts, we find that the authority of the Heavenly Kami was first bestowed on the Sky-father, Izanagi and his spouse, the Earth-mother, Izanami. These two were sent down from Takama-ga-Hara on a mission of primeval creation. There are good reasons for believing, however, that the earliest Japanese cosmogony attempted to carry speculation back no further than to the activities of the Sky-father and the Earth-mother. If this is true, the oldest conception of the source of authority must have found its center in these two deities and not in the more indefinite, and probably later, figures, that precede them in the extant accounts. A notion of a tripartite division of authority in the god world must have

developed early, however. It appears to have been directly given to the early Japanese ancestors as the immediate result of their experiences with phenomena of the sky—with sun, moon and lightning-bearing storm. This experience received traditional expression in the form of the mythological statement that upon the birth of three illustrious children, the Sky-father divided his authority into three parts. To Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the goddess of the sun and the bright sky, was given dominion over the day; to Tsukiyomi-no-Mikoto, the god of the moon, was given authority over the night; and to Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto, the god of storm, was given the rule of the wide Sea Plain. Each division was given to a great Kami, and it would be merely a matter of ordinary observation to the myth-makers that power and authority in each one of these realms was concentrated in a great manifestation of light, that is, in sun, in moon and in lightning flash. Representations of these originals would necessarily be saturated with like potencies. They would be the very essence of dominion and power. The spirit of the Sun Goddess who ruled the upper world of the bright sky was in the mirror; the *mana* of Tsukiyomi who ruled the night sky was in the *magatama*; and Susa-no-Wo-no-Mikoto who, like Poseidon of the Greeks, ruled the waves as well as the upper air of stormy wind and lightning, re-lived in the sacred sword.

We can understand from this something of the significance that must have attached, in the minds of the ancient Japanese, to the lodgment with the royal family of the Three Sacred Celestial Emblems. When Ninigi-no-Mikoto was sent down to the Central Land of Reed Plains to possess them and rule over them, all authority of heaven and earth was reunited and centered in him. In the three-fold regalia which he carried were concentrated the mystic power of all heavenly dominion and, at the same time, the wondrous divine protection of the Kami. These three emblems originally belonged to powerful deities. They were full of the *mana* by which these deities ruled. The Japanese rulers received their authorization to reign from the Kami of Heaven. Their regalia were the regalia of the gods.

We can see in this an asseveration of the claim—albeit in mythological language—of the early rulers of Yamato to an unqualified authority, an authority that extended not only over the Central Land but also over Day and Night and Storm and Sea.

The old records repeatedly speak of the Japanese Imperial Dynasty as *Hitsugi*, that is as a "Sun Succession," or better, perhaps, a "Light Succession." *Tsugi* means "succession," and *hi* means interchangeably "light," "sun" or "fire." The Emperor is the offspring of the Sun. He is the child of Light. We can see from this how inevitable it is that his regalia consist of the emblems of Light.

The current explanation of this ancient association of Imperial power with light and sun makes use of a theory of metaphor. The Emperor is to his people as the sun is to the universe, or as light is to the world. Each in his respective world is unique, majestic and unapproachable. In the final analysis, to speak of the Emperor as *Hitsugi*, from the point of view of such a theory, is merely a convenient and vivid form of speech for expressing his greatness.

If the analysis we have carried out in the preceding pages may be relied on, we may conclude that the idea of a sun or light descent for the Emperor, and at the same time for all true members of the Japanese race, carries us back to a totemistic conception of human origin and relationship. The Japanese are children of Light, that is of physical light. Theirs is a light totem, and since the sun is the overpowering representation of light, we may say a sun totem. The final explanation of this mystery will probably not be found until we have secured an acceptable explanation of totemism, which is not yet. We are here carried back to those dim and incomprehensible regions of primitive thought in which the distinctions of human and non-human are lost in a great merge of cosmic relationship, wherein man regards himself literally as the child of plant, animal or heavenly body. The Japanese conception of relationship to the sun must have come out of such a remote stratum of folk-belief. The irrefutable proof of that relationship and the visible attesta-

tion of its reality are offered by the Emperor through his possession of the three-fold regalia.

We have examined somewhat in detail the origin and nature of the Imperial Japanese regalia. We have found therein striking illustration of the principle that objects forming the insignia of early kingship tend to partake of a magical nature. They mysteriously carry over the divine potencies by which the dynasty is maintained and miraculously protect the ruler and the state.

The history of the Japanese regalia also illustrates another important principle of human social evolution, namely, that objects and rites whose original functions are magical become, at more advanced cultural levels, the symbols of higher ethical ideals. The three objects of the regalia thus have become the outward representations of the moral qualities of the good ruler, while the fact of the uninterrupted existence of the original regalia has become the symbol and guarantee of the eternity of the Imperial Throne. Kitabatake Chikafusa writing in the early part of the fourteenth century says: "Heaven and earth from of old change not; sun and moon alter not their light; still more do the Three Sacred Treasures endure in the world—and that which is eternal is the Imperial Throne which perpetuates our nation."

The ethical interpretations that have been attached to the regalia are varied and beautiful. The mirror stands for purity, righteousness, integrity and wisdom; the jewels for benevolence, gentleness, affection and obedience; the sword for valor, sagacity, justice and firmness. In the historical representations these qualities have obviously been arranged in groups of three. The best known group is a restatement of the Confucian trinity of Wisdom, Benevolence and Courage.

The later history of the replica sword and mirror and the original necklace requires a concluding word.

For some eight hundred years after the Emperor Suinin built the first of the Ise shrines for housing the original sword and mirror, the replica of these two objects together with the original jewels were handed down from Emperor

to Emperor as the indispensable authentication of royal authority and as the protecting amulets of the throne. After the close of the Heian Period in the middle of the ninth century A.D., the replica of the mirror was accorded a special place of enshrinement in a building of the Imperial Palace called the *Naiji Dokoro*, or "Place of Inner Attendance," so-called from the name *Naiji* given certain female attendants of the Emperor. This is another name for the *Kashiko Dokoro*, or "The Place of Awe," under which title the sanctuary of the mirror is still preserved in the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō.

With the provision of a special tabernacle for the replica mirror, the part which it played in the enthronement ceremonies underwent a change. It was now no longer removed from its place of enshrinement to appear along with the sword and the jewels as the insignia of royal prerogative, but became the Holy Place before which solemn announcement of succession was made to the spirit of Amaterasu-Ōmikami. This is the position which the mirror occupies in the enthronement rites at the present time. The jewels and the sword were not enshrined, but continued to be handed down from the personal custody of one Emperor to another. They were, and are still, kept in a special room in the Palace called the *Kenji no Ma*, "The Sword and Jewel Room." The ravages of time have brought a full share of injury to the replica regalia. In the year 960 A.D. a palace fire occurred in which the mirror was slightly damaged. Since this date for upwards of twenty times the replica sword and mirror, and the original jewels, have met with mishap in fire and earthquake. Two of these fires are particularly noteworthy for the grave consequences which they brought especially to the mirror. In the year 1005 A.D. a conflagration destroyed the *Naiji Dokoro*. The mirror, sadly damaged by the heat, was rescued from the ashes of its former sanctuary. Again during the Chōkyū Era, in the year 1040, the mirror was injured by fire, this time so badly that only a portion of the former whole was left. In this mutilated shape it has been handed down from generation to genera-



tion to the very present. Reverence for the ancient emblem as made under Sujin Tennō has precluded the supposed profanation involved in its repair.

At the height of the civil war of the twelfth century the youthful Emperor, Antoku, guarded by Taira-no-Munemori, fleeing from the powerful Minamoto, came to Dan-no-Ura, near the modern Shimonoseki, bearing the sacred regalia with him. Here in 1185 was fought the bloody naval battle of Dan-no-Ura, and Antoku, clasped in the arms of his grandmother and bearing with him the jewels and the sword, perished in the waves. One version of the battle states that the mirror was likewise cast into the sea, but later recovered by Minamoto soldiers. Another version relates that the mirror was found afloat in a boat and handed over to Minamoto Yoshitsune. In any case it was fortunately recovered and ultimately restored safely to Kyōto. Until the Restoration of 1868 it was preserved in the Naiji Dokoro of the Imperial Palace of that city. It is now permanently enshrined in the Ummei Den of the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō. The only exception to this practice is at the time of the great enthronement ceremonies when it is carried back for a brief period to its old home in Kyōto.

As we have just noted, both the jewels and the sword were cast into the sea at the battle of Dan-no-Ura. Thanks to the buoyancy of the wooden casket in which they were contained, the jewels floated to the surface and were recovered. The sword was forever lost. For the brief period from 1190 to 1210 a sword called *Hi no Goza no Goken*, or the Sword of the Imperial Day Room, provided from the Imperial collection, was used in the enthronement rites. Early in the reign of Emperor Tsuchimikado a priest of the Grand Shrine of Ise, by the name of Ōnakatomi Chikatōshi, received a revelation from the Sun Goddess to the effect that a sacred sword from the Hōden, or Treasure House, of this shrine should be set aside for the enthronement ceremonies. Beginning with the year 1210 A.D. and extending right down to the present, successive Emperors have made use of this sword.

Between 1331 and 1393, during the period in which the rule of Japan was divided between the Southern and the Northern Courts, the true regalia remained in the possession of the former line, first at Oki and then at Yoshino. Even after the reunion of the two lines partisans of the southern branch repeatedly attempted to revive the fortunes of their former suzerains and in 1443 under the leadership of Kusunoki Masahide they stole the sword and the jewels, and barely missed making off with the mirror as well. The sword was left at the Kiyomidzu Temple of Kyōto and speedily found its way back to the Imperial Palace. Kusunoki, in attendance on the Imperial Prince, Takahide, fled to Mount Hiei. He was quickly defeated by the royal forces sent against him and both he and Takahide lost their lives. The jewels passed to the custody of certain members of the Kusunoki family at Yoshino, under whose guardian care were the two Imperial Princes Kitayama-no-Miya and Tadayoshi-Ō. These two Princes were regarded as in possession *de jure* of the jewels. Later the jewels were handed over to the Imperial Prince Takamasa at Yoshino, and when this Prince was assassinated they were restored to the legitimate Emperor Gohanazono. This was in 1458. Since this date they have remained secure in the possession of the reigning Emperor.

In concluding this outline of the history of the regalia we may observe by way of summary that the originals have in every case been preserved from the period of indefinite mythological beginnings right down to the present. This remarkable fact is due largely to the extraordinary sense of responsibility that has been felt toward them as the mystic insignia of the gods. They have been accorded the treatment of *Kami*. The Yata Mirror is enshrined as the *Shintai* or "Divine Body" of the Grand Shrine of Ise; The Kusanagi Sword is the *Shintai* of the great shrine of Atsuta near Nagoya. The Yasakani Curved Jewels remain in the immediate possession of the Imperial Family. The sword made by Sujin Tennō and used for some twelve hundred years in the accession ceremonies has been irrevocably lost. A sword given by the priests of the Grand Im-

perial Shrine of Ise has been substituted for it in the enthronement ceremonies. The mirror made by Sujin Tennō at the same time that the sword was cast still exists, but in damaged form, having only partially survived the wreck of the centuries. Thus in the actual enthronement ceremonies of the present the regalia emblems that are made use of are, the original jewels, the mirror cast in the time of Sujin Tennō, and a sword given the Imperial Family by the priests of Ise in 1210 A.D.

The following table summarizes the salient points of the history of the regalia. Objects now used in the Enthronement Ceremonies are marked with double stars (\*\*).

### THE THREE SACRED IMPERIAL TREASURES

I. Originals of unknown origin. They appear in the mythological period. Associated originally with magic as emblems of sun, moon and lightning.

A. The Yata Mirror—Enshrined at Ise Dai Jingū.

B. The Kusanagi Sword—Enshrined at Atsuta Jingū.

\*\* C. The Yasakani Curved Jewels—Kept in the Tōkyō Imperial Palace, in the Kenji no Ma (The Sword and Seal Room).

II. Replica made by Sujin Tennō.

(Replica of Magatama were not made).

\*\* A. Mirror, damaged by fire—Enshrined in the Kashiko Dokoro of the Tōkyō Imperial Palace.

B. Sword. Lost in the Battle of Dan-no-Ura (1185 A.D.).

\*\* (Since 1210 A.D. a sword from the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise has been used in the Enthronement Ceremonies).

## CHAPTER V

### THE CEREMONIES IN OUTLINE

The handing on and receiving of the three Sacred Treasures as the symbols of Imperial Succession is the most important transaction connected with accession to the Japanese Throne. From remote past to very present Japan has consistently guarded and fulfilled this rite. In the possession of the regalia the authority to rule and the legitimacy of the succession are expressed. Thus the act of handing on these three objects to the new ruler is properly considered the most important of all Japanese rites. In the early periods of Japanese history the enthronement ceremonies in their entirety, centered in the transfer of the regalia, and were carried out immediately on the demise of an Emperor, with simple and impressive forms.

In old Japan of the pre-Nara period, at the time of the accession of a new ruler, a new palace was built, containing a throne, and on this the Emperor took his place with the Three Sacred Treasures in his possession. This act of enthronement was followed by a season of feasting. The "palace" of those remote days was merely an enlarged reproduction of the hut of the ordinary person. It finds its modern survival among the more simply constructed Shintō shrines. A reproduction of this ancient Imperial home in a somewhat modified form appears in the modern enthronement ceremonies in connection with the buildings of the "Great New Food Festival" (Daijō Sai). The primitive Japanese home, the peasant's hut and the Emperor's palace alike, had earthen floors. The sleeping place was a raised wooden couch, called the *toko* or sleeping floor. This old dais still exists in every properly constructed Japanese house of the present under the old name of *toko no ma* or "sleeping place." It is now no longer used either for sleep or rest, but is reserved as a place of honor. It is there one sees the simple decorations of the home, a hanging scroll on the wall, a vase of carefully arranged flowers, or some family treas-

ure. In primitive Japan also it was more than a sleeping place. In the floorless Japanese hut the principal *tokonoma* of the house was peculiarly the master's private spot, the place of highest honor, not only where the master rested but where he kept his weapons and his personal or household treasures. The couch of the Great Chief of the people was accordingly the Throne of the land. It was here on the Royal Couch-throne that the Three Sacred Treasures were kept. When the Ruler died they were moved from the old Couch-throne to the new one.

With the passage of the centuries the simple enthronement rites of the primitive period have grown into an extended series of complicated ceremonies that begin immediately after the death of an Emperor and which are not completed until two, and sometimes three or more years, after the accession of the new Ruler.

It is impossible to make adequate translation into English of the titles of even the most important of the elaborate ceremonies wherewith the Emperor of Japan consummates and formally commemorates his accession to the Imperial Throne. The reason is, of course, that the exact equivalents of the ceremonies themselves are not to be found in European usage. For the entire group the terms "Coronation Ceremonies" and "Enthronement Ceremonies" have received a certain amount of official sanction in recent English translations of government documents. The former translation gained currency at the time of the accession of the late Emperor, Taishō Tennō, in 1915; the latter translation has found considerable favor in connection with the celebration of the accession of the reigning monarch. "Coronation" hardly seems strictly correct in rites wherein the crown is conspicuously absent. It is true that headdresses of ancient style are worn by the participants in the modern ceremonies. At certain periods of the past even more elaborate headdresses were used; but Japanese enthronement rites have never included anything that corresponds to the European method of conferring royal authority by the act of crowning.

It is true that in the ceremony held in the Shishin Den of the Kyōto Imperial Palace the Emperor actually mounts

a throne and makes formal announcement to his subjects and to the world at large of the fact of his accession. This is properly an enthronement ceremony, yet it is only one among a number of important state observances that mark the celebrations. "Accession Ceremonies" has been suggested, but this designation is hardly possible as a general term in view of the fact that the accession is a single definite transaction carried out immediately on the demise of one ruler and the transfer of authority to his successor. "Enthronement Ceremonies" is permissible if taken in the sense of all the forms and rites that appear in connection with the exaltation of the Imperial Heir to the prerogatives of the Throne, including the original legal accession and all later state announcements and commemorations thereof.

The entire group of observances, held both to consummate and to commemorate a new accession to the Imperial Throne of Japan, is designated Gotai-Ten and Gotai-Rei, both of which titles may be rendered with fair accuracy by the translation "The Great Ceremonies." There are three major movements in the Gotai-Ten. The first is the so-called Senso<sup>1</sup> (lit. "Tread Throne") which is the legal accession to the position of Emperor; the second is the Sokui-Rei<sup>2</sup> (lit. "Ascend Throne Ceremony") in which the Emperor ascends the throne of the Shishin Den of the Kyōto Palace and makes formal announcement of his accession; the third is the Daijō Sai<sup>3</sup> (lit. "Great New Food Festival") in which certain very ancient religious rites of communion with the great Kami are performed by the Emperor. These three movements are followed by state banquets, Royal visits to the Grand Imperial Shrine at Ise, and to Imperial Mausolea, and the Royal return to Tōkyō and final ceremonies before the Palace Shrines.

As stated in an earlier section, Article Ten of the Law of the Imperial Household of Japan provides that immediately on the death of the Emperor the Imperial Heir shall ascend the Throne and shall acquire the Divine Treasures

<sup>1</sup> 踐 祚

<sup>2</sup> 即位禮

<sup>3</sup> 大嘗祭



of the Imperial Ancestors. Ascension of the Throne, as here used in the Imperial Household Law, means assumption of the privileges and responsibilities of the position Imperial head of nation and government. This Senso, or act of accession, took place in the case of the reigning Emperor in the early hours of the morning of December 25, 1926. On the same day was carried out the formal ceremony of the Transfer of the Sword and the Jewels (*Kenji Togyo no Gi*) to the new Emperor. Imperial Household Law further requires that immediately on the accession of a new ruler the chief ritualist of the Court shall announce the transfer of Imperial authority before the Shrine of the Sacred Regalia Mirror (Kashiko Dokoro) in the Ummei Den, before the Sanctuary of the Spirits of the Imperial Ancestors (Kōrei Den) and before the Shrine of the Gods of Heaven and Earth (Shingi Den) within the precincts of the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō. These announcements were made for the reigning Emperor on December 25, 1926. Three days later (Dec. 28) the Emperor received in audience the chief representatives of the nation and communicated to them by Imperial Rescript the fact of the accession. All of these transactions are officially regarded as part of the Senso ceremonies. It is further provided in Imperial Household Law that at the accession of a new Emperor the name of the era shall be immediately changed.

The dates of the second and the third of the Great Ceremonies named above, that is, the Sokui-Rei, or the Throne Ascending Ceremony and the Daijō Sai, or the Great New Food Festival, are determined by Imperial Household Law. After the death of the ruler there follows one full year of national mourning. During this period it is impossible to celebrate the new accession to the Imperial Throne. Furthermore, it is required that rice used as food offering in the Daijō Sai be planted, grown, and harvested after the expiration of the year of official mourning. It must be rice without the contamination of death on any portion of its growth or preparation. It thus transpires that, at the earliest, nearly two years must elapse between the time of the

demise of one Emperor and the national celebration of the accession of his successor.

This separation of the legal accession to the Throne from the formal celebration and proclamation of the fact to the world, by a long period of mourning and preparation does not at all represent original Japanese procedure. In old Japan no separation whatsoever was made between the Senso or accession and the Sokui or the celebration and announcement thereof. The two were formerly part of one and the same ceremony, taking place at one and the same time. From Emperor Jimmu to Empress Saimei (655-661 A.D.), that is, for thirty-seven generations of rulers, there was no distinction between the Senso and the Sokui. But with the next Emperor, Tenchi Tennō, (662-671 A.D.), Chinese influence manifested itself to such an extent that ceremonies and procedures in celebration of the accession became almost altogether Chinese. Under this influence there developed the custom of separating the Sokui ceremonies from the Senso by a considerable period of time. Another factor which undoubtedly promoted the division into two parts of what was originally but one ceremony was the practice of Imperial retirement and the elevation of a successor to the Throne while the former occupant was still living. A single accession ceremony was not sufficient to properly emphasize and make known to the nation the fact of a new succession and for this latter purpose an elaborate Sokui celebration was developed, according to Chinese forms.

Meanwhile the Great New Food Festival has ever remained purely Japanese. Herein are carried out the most extraordinary procedures to be found anywhere on earth today in connection with the enthronement of any monarch. In the dead of night, alone, except for the service of two female attendants, the Emperor, as the High Priest of the nation, performs solemn rites that carry us back to the very beginnings of Japanese history, rites which are so old that the very reasons for their performance have long since been forgotten. Concealed in this remarkable midnight service we can find the original Japanese enthronement ceremony. Here appears a second throne, older by centuries than that used in

the Shishin Den ceremony, and proclaiming by every line of its couch-like construction and by every detail of its surroundings that it is the True Throne of the old Yamato Sumeragi. Thus we discover two thrones and two great enthronement ceremonies.

As already noted Imperial Household Law specifies that the Enthronement Ceremonies shall be held in the city of Kyōto (Article Eleven). The Law does not express a uniform historical practice in this matter. The ceremonies antedate the founding of Kyōto itself. From the remote beginnings of Japanese history down to the time of Kōnin Tennō (770-781 A.D.) the practice prevailed of founding a new capital with each new ruler, and the site of the enthronement ceremonies varied accordingly. Then for more than a thousand years after the founding of Heian-kyō (Kyōto) by Kwammu Tennō in 794 A.D. this city preserved its place as the capital of the nation and except for interruptions in the periods of civil wars, was the scene of the enthronement rites of successive Emperors. The accession to the throne of the Meiji Emperor took place in Kyōto in 1868. When, ten years later, this revered monarch revisited the home of his boyhood, he is said to have observed the apparent decline in the fortunes of the city, and mindful of the close associations maintained between this city and the Imperial House for more than a thousand years, he expressed the wish that the enthronement ceremonies of the future Emperors of Japan should be held only in Kyōto. This wish was later made into Imperial Household Law, and with the accession of Taishō Tennō actually carried into effect.

Imperial Household regulations covering the enthronement ceremonies of the reigning Emperor were promulgated on December 30, 1927. They are a revision of regulations issued February 11, 1909, which are in turn partially based on those of much earlier times. The following paragraphs summarize with a certain minimum of explanation the pertinent sections of these regulations.

After the rice crop of the year following the close of the period of national mourning has been gathered in, the

Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai are performed. The regulations specify that the season in which the ceremonies shall take place shall be between the end of autumn and the beginning of winter. This brings the celebrations into the month of November. The Daijō Sai is performed immediately after the close of the Sokui Rei. This holding of the two ceremonies in conjunction is a very recent procedure, first carried into effect at the enthronement of Emperor Taishō in 1915. Prior to this the two were separated by a period of months and sometimes of years. In the case of the Meiji Emperor the Sokui Ceremonies were held in Kyōto, October 16, 1868. The Daijō Sai was held in Tōkyō on December 28, 1871. The usual procedure regarding determination of dates in ancient times was as follows. If the Sokui Rei occurred at any time during the first seven months of the year, the Daijō Sai was held in the winter immediately following. If, however, the Sokui Rei came in the second half of the year, between the beginning of August and the end of December, then the Daijō Sai was not observed until the second winter season following the Sokui Rei.

As soon as the exact dates of these two ceremonies are fixed they are announced above the joint signatures of the Minister of the Imperial Household Department and of the other Ministers of State. The dates are also immediately made known before the Shrine of the Regalia Mirror and before the Sanctuary of the Spirits of the Imperial Ancestors and the Shrine of the Deities of Heaven and Earth. Imperial messengers are sent at the same time to make like announcements at the Grand Imperial Shrine of Amaterasu-Ōmikami at Ise and at the Mausoleum of the first Emperor, Jimmu Tennō, and also at the tombs of the four Emperors immediately preceding the reigning Emperor. Two days after the dispatching of these messengers, the Emperor sends gifts of fine cloth to Ise and to the above mausolea. Then early in November the Emperor transfers his place of residence from Tōkyō to Kyōto. The Kashiko Dokoro is transported in the same procession and after reaching Kyōto it is deposited with appropriate ceremonies in a

shrine connected with the Kyōto Imperial Palace, called the Shunkyō Den.

On the morning of the day in which the Sokui Ceremony is performed the Emperor and Empress proceed in state to the Shunkyō Den and in the presence of a brilliant assembly of high representatives of the nation and of foreign powers, worship Amaterasu-Ōmikami as the Great Progenitrix of the nation, and announce the fact of the accession. On the same day Imperial representatives in Tōkyō announce the enthronement before the Shrines of the Tōkyō Palace. On the day following the Sokui Rei ancient Shintō dances (*Okagura*), attended by the Emperor and Empress, are held before the Kashiko Dokoro in the Shunkyō Den at Kyōto.

The date fixed for the Sokui Rei of the reigning Emperor is November 10, 1928. Two days after the consummation of this ceremony Imperial messengers are sent to the Grand Imperial Shrine at Ise, to the shrines of the Tōkyō Palace (Kōrei Den and Shin Den), and to the great national shrines to make announcement of the Daijō Sai. The Daijō Sai itself follows on the night of November 14-15. On the preceding day rites for pacifying the spirits of the Emperor and the Empress, the so-called Chinkon Ceremony, are performed. On the day of the Daijō Sai messengers bearing gifts of cloth are sent to the Ise Dai Jingū and to the Kōrei Den and Shin Den of the Tōkyō Imperial Palace. On the same day food offerings are presented before the Kashiko Dokoro. After the Daijō Sai has ended the Emperor gives a series of state banquets (Nov. 16-17). Following this the Emperor and Empress proceed in person to worship at the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise and at the mausolea of the first Emperor and of the four rulers immediately preceding the present reign (Nov. 20-29). On returning to Tōkyō the Kashiko Dokoro is restored to its sanctuary in the Ummei Den, and the Emperor and Empress worship at the shrines of the Spirits of the Imperial Ancestors, and of the Deities of Heaven and Earth.

The above summary of official regulations omits certain details. It lists in general, however, the main steps in

the enthronement observances. Prior to passing on to a more extended examination of the Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai we should note in outline at least, the ceremony of announcement and worship held in Kyōto before the Kashiko Dokoro on the morning of the Sokui Rei.

The Shunkyō Den [also read Shunkō Den] within and before which this ceremony is carried out was the Shrine of the Sacred Regalia Mirror prior to the removal of the Kashiko Dokoro to Tōkyō in the early part of the Meiji Era. The original Shunkyō Den was left vacant after this transfer and in 1895, when a shrine to the spirit of Jimmu Tennō was built at Kashiwabara, the building was given to the new institution and removed thither. A new Shunkyō Den was erected at the time of the Enthronement Ceremonies of Taisho Tennō in 1915. It is chastely constructed of *hinoki*, ornamented with metal work of silver and brass, and arranged in three divisions, which provide an inner sanctum for the Kashiko Dokoro, a middle room for the Emperor and the Empress and a larger outer compartment for Princes and Princesses, high government officials and participating dignitaries.

In the early morning of the day of the Sokui Rei the Shunkyō Den is decorated and placed in order. Within the shrine, in the center of the middle area before the altar, is spread a mat for the Emperor and just to the east of this another mat for the Empress. These mats are square thick *tatami*, three feet (*shaku*) on each side, bordered with brocade. Tables for the Sword and the Jewels are placed near the seat of the Emperor. At the appointed hour the outer palace gates are thrown open and guards of honor take their places before them. Following this, dignitaries and officials, civil and military with their ladies, members of the nobility and their ladies, representatives of foreign governments and their ladies, arrive and take their assigned positions in two long halls of audience arranged one on either side of the open area before the shrine. Next, Princes and Princesses of the Blood arrive and take their places in a hall of waiting called the Giyō Den to the west of the Shunkyō Den. Immediately following this the Emperor and the



PLAN ILLUSTRATING THE CEREMONY  
BEFORE THE KASHIKO DOKORO IN  
THE SHUNKYŌ DEN

1. — Shunkyō Den—Where the Kashiko Dokoro (Sacred Mirror) is enshrined during the Enthronement Ceremonies.
2. — Hall for Musicians.
3. — Hall for the Palanquin of the Kashiko Dokoro.
4. — Pavilion for Shintō Dances (Kagura Ya).
- 5.-6.—Halls of Attendance for Guests.
7. — Guards of Honor.
- 8.-9.—Officials representing ancient guards, armed with bows and arrows.
- 10.-11.—Officials bearing bows, quivers with arrows, spears, swords and shields.
- 12.-13.—Gongs.
- 14.-15.—Drums.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, *Taishō Yonen*.

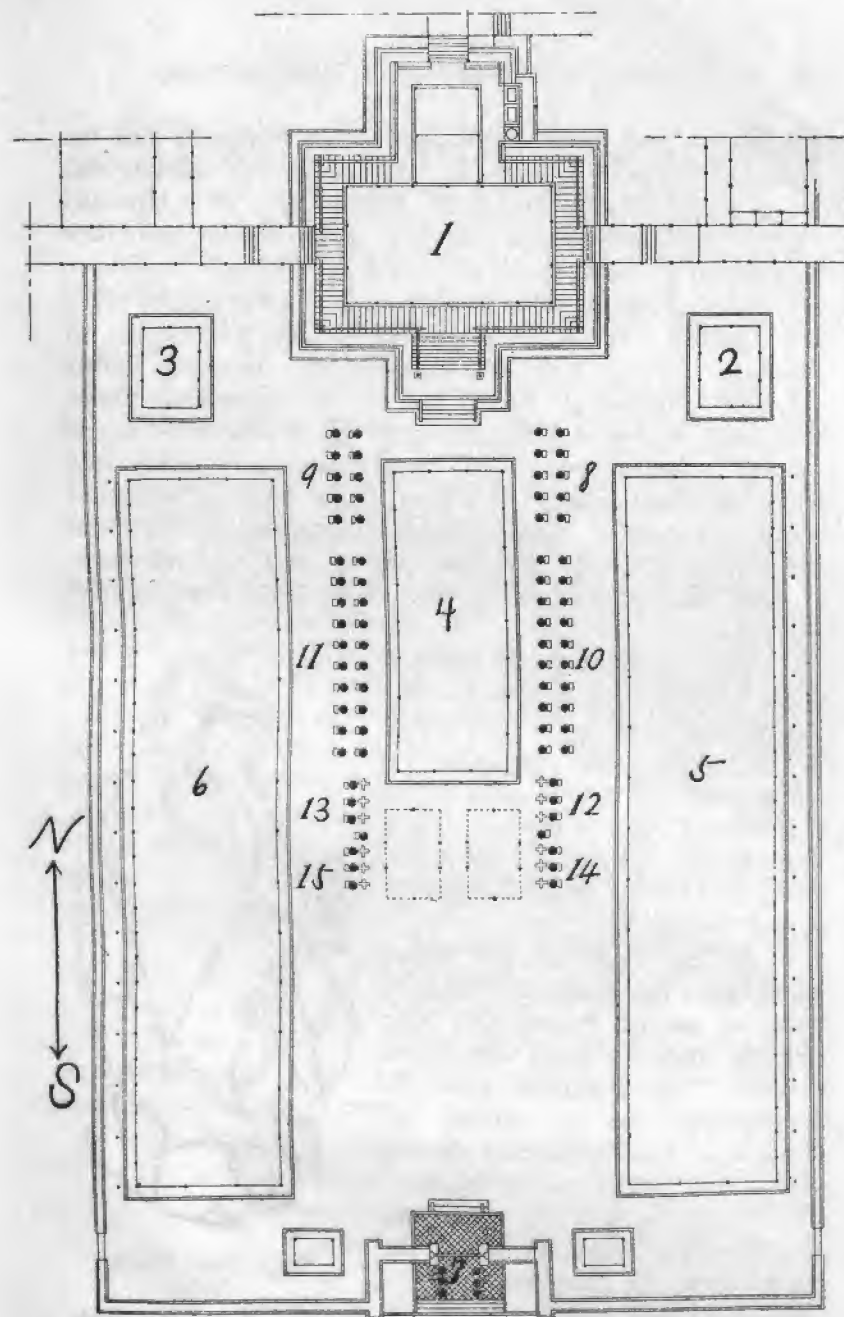


Diagram of Ceremony before the Kashiko Dokoro.—  
See facing page.

Empress arrive at the Giyō Den. The Emperor and the Empress and all Princes and Princesses and all officials who are to participate directly in the ceremonies don ceremonial robes. The hands of the Emperor and the Empress are then cleansed with consecrated water, and the Emperor is given a baton<sup>1</sup> as a badge of priestly office while the Empress is given a ceremonial fan called *hisen*. Following this, beaters of drums and gongs take their places in the open area before the shrine, seven on either side of the approach. Next, bearers of ceremonial objects consisting of swords, bows and arrows, halberds and shields, twenty persons on either side, take their places nearer the shrine in line with the beaters of gongs and drums. Finally, guards of honor, ten on either side, carrying swords and bows and wearing on their backs quivers full of arrows, take places in the same lines, nearest the shrine.

Drums and gongs are sounded three times as a signal for the ceremonies proper to begin. All stand. While ancient music (*kagura uta*) is being rendered, the screens before the inner shrine are opened. Food offerings are placed on the altars and the chief ritualist reads a prayer (*norito*).

At the close of the above movements the Emperor followed by a retinue of Princes and high officials takes his place within the shrine. The Empress, similarly accompanied by a retinue of Princesses, court ladies and officials, then takes her appointed place.

A chamberlain then places the Regalia Sword and the Jewels on stands near the Emperor.



Shintō Priest carrying Shaku.

<sup>1</sup> This baton is called a *shaku*. It is a flat, elongated piece of wood, more rarely made of ivory, carried by Shintō priests, and anciently by Court officials, as an insignia of office. It is also used by those participating in Shintō ceremonies as a convenient device for holding memoranda.

The Emperor then passes to the altar and worships, and reads a proclamation to the Spirit of Amaterasu-Ōmikami.

The Empress then worships before the altar.

Next, other member of the Imperial Family worship.

The Emperor and Empress, followed by their retinues then withdraw.

Worship before the Kashiko Dokoro by officials and other dignitaries is then permitted.

Following this, while ancient music is being rendered, the offerings are removed and the inner doors of the shrine are closed.

As the last phase of the ceremony gongs and drums are sounded three times and all retire.

The Shunkyō Den ceremony is thus one of worship of Amaterasu-Ōmikami and of formal announcement to her of the accomplishment and celebration of the new accession. One important fact in connection with this ceremony should be particularly noted. It is here in this ceremony alone of all the various rites and forms carried out in commemoration of the Enthronement that the traditional Regalia appear together—the Sword and the Jewels by the side of the Emperor and the Mirror as the “Sacred Divine Body” of the shrine before which worship is conducted. In all the other ceremonies the Sword and Jewels are separated from their ancient companion.

On the afternoon of the same day as that on which the above ceremony is conducted the Great Announcement to the nation and to the world is made.

The ceremonies mentioned in the preceding discussion as well as certain others that will be noted in the following chapters are listed in outline below.

#### I.—The *SENSO*. Accession Ceremonies.

1.—The Accession. Dec. 25, 1926.

2.—Announcement of the new succession before the Kashiko Dokoro, Tōkyō Palace. Dec. 25, 1926.

3.—Announcement of the new succession before the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den, Tōkyō Palace. Dec. 25, 1926.

4.—Ceremony of Transferring the Sword and the Jewels. Dec. 25, 1926.

5.—Imperial Audience following the succession. Dec. 28, 1926.

II.—The *SOKUI REI*. Ceremony of Ascending the Throne. Announcements to the Spirits of Imperial Ancestors, to the Deities of Heaven and Earth, to the nation and to the world.

1.—The announcement of the dates before the Kashiko Dokoro. Jan. 17, 1928.

2.—The announcement of dates before the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den. Jan. 17, 1928.

3.—The ceremony of sending Imperial Messengers to the Ise Dai Jingū, and to the mausolea of Jimmu Tennō and the four rulers immediately preceding the reigning Emperor. Jan. 17, 1928.

4.—The ceremony of sending offerings of cloth to the Ise Dai Jingū. Jan. 19, 1928.

5.—The ceremony of sending offerings of cloth to the mausolea of Jimmu Tennō and of the four rulers immediately preceding the reigning Emperor. Jan. 19, 1928.

6.—The Imperial Procession to Kyōto. Nov. 6-7, 1928.

7.—The Ceremony of placing the Kashiko Dokoro in the Shunkyō Den of Kyōto. Nov. 7, 1928.

8.—Ceremony of announcing the Sokui before the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den of Tōkyō. Nov. 10, 1928.

9.—Ceremony of worship and announcement before the Kashiko Dokoro enshrined in the Shunkyō Den, Kyōto. 10 A.M., Nov. 10, 1928.

10.—*THE SOKUI REI*. In the Shishin Den, Kyōto. 2 P.M., Nov. 10, 1928.

11.—Sacred dances (*Okagura*) before the Kashiko Dokoro. Nov. 11, 1928.

III.—The *DAIJŌ SAI*. The Great New Food Festival.

1.—Ceremony of selecting the sacred rice fields. Feb. 5, 1928.

2.—Ceremony of planting the sacred rice. June 1, 1928.

3.—Ceremonies of gathering the grain. Sept. 20-22, 1928.

4.—Ceremony of sending Imperial Messengers to the Ise Dai Jingū, to the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den, and to government and national shrines. Nov. 12, 1928.

5.—Ceremony of *Chinkon*, "Pacification of Spirits." Nov. 13, 1928.

6.—Ceremony of presenting offerings to the Ise Dai Jingū. Nov. 14, 1928.

7.—Ceremony of presenting offerings to the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den, Tōkyō. Nov. 14, 1928.

8.—Ceremony of presenting food offerings at the Kashiko Dokoro. Nov. 14, 1928.

9.—The *DAIJŌ SAI*. In the Yuki and the Suki Shrines.

a.—Ceremony in the Yuki Den. Nov. 14, 8 P.M.

b.—Ceremony in the Suki Den. Nov. 15, 2 A.M.

IV.—State Banquets in Celebration of the Enthronement.

1.—Banquet of the First Day after the Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai. Nov. 16, 1928.

2.—Banquet of the Second Day after the Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai. Nov. 17, 1928.

3.—The Evening Banquet after the Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai. Nov. 17, 1928.

V.—Imperial Visitation to the Ise Dai Jingū and to Imperial Mausolea.

1.—To Ise. Nov. 20-21, 1928.

2.—To the Mausoleum of Emperor Jimmu. Nov. 23, 1928.



- 3.—To the Mausolea of Emperors Ninkō and Kōmei. Nov. 24, 1928.
- 4.—To the Mausoleum of Emperor Meiji. Nov. 25, 1928.
- 5.—To the Mausoleum of Emperor Taishō. Nov. 29, 1928.

VI.—The Imperial Return to Tōkyō and final Ceremonies.

- 1.—Return to Tōkyō. Nov. 26-27, 1928.
- 2.—Ceremony of Restoring the Kashiko Dokoro to the Ummei Den of the Tōkyō Imperial Palace. Nov. 27, 1928.
- 3.—Ceremony of sacred dances before the Kashiko Dokoro. Nov. 28, 1928.
- 4.—Ceremony of worship by Emperor and Empress before the Kōrei Den and the Shin Den. Nov. 30, 1928.



The Enthronement Ceremony of the Shishin Den. The Prime Minister is shown standing at the top of the main stairway reading the Address of Congratulation to the Throne.



THE SOKUI REI: THE CEREMONY OF  
ASCENDING THE THRONE

In the *Kojiruien*, or "Classified Collection of Ancient Writings"—an extensive compilation of Japanese historical documents with commentary, issued in 1897—it is written, "At the time of his accession the Emperor sits on the *Takamikura* and announces to the hundreds of officials and the tens of thousands of people the fact of his succession to the Heavenly Sun Dynasty. This is called the *Sokui*."

This quotation properly interprets the meaning of the *Sokui Rei*. It is in essence a Great Announcement. Attention has already been called to the fact that this important ceremony is held in the Throne Hall, or the *Shishin Den*, situated in the southern section of the Kyōto Imperial Palace Grounds. The *Shishin Den* is built according to dignified Chinese models, and reveals in its very name the fact of Chinese influence on the *Sokui* Ceremony which has already been mentioned. The last element of the name of the Throne Hall—*den*—means "palace" and has no special connotations beyond those of a stately building. The second syllable *shin* or *shii* is written with a rare ideogram that was anciently used in China exclusively of the person, possessions and acts of the Emperor. It is composed of the ideogram for the north star with a roof over it. Originally it consisted of the former element only. The roof was added for distinction and to set it apart for Imperial use. The first syllable *shi* literally means purple. It is part of the name, read *shibi* in Sino-Japanese, with which the Chinese designated the stars about the polestar. That part of the palace of the Chinese Emperor in which he met his officials, that is to say the place from which he ruled his dominions, was designated by a combination of the names of these stars.

In ancient China the place of honor was the north. At his accession to the throne and on important state occasions the Emperor faced south and was regarded as ruling his

PLAN ILLUSTRATING THE SOKUI REI —  
CEREMONY OF ASCENDING THE THRONE  
OF THE SHISHIN DEN

- 1.—Shishin Den—Containing the Thrones of the Emperor and the Empress.
- 2.—Cherry Tree (Sakura).
- 3.—Orange Tree (Tachibana).
- 4.—Shōmei Gate.
- 5.—Nikka Gate.
- 6.—Gekka Gate.
- 7.—The Sun Image Plume Banner (Nichizō Tōban).
- 8.—The Moon Image Plume Banner (Getsuzō Tōban).
- 9.—The Great Silk Banner of the Yata Crow (Yata Karasu Dai Kimban).
- 10.—The Great Silk Banner of the Sacred Kite (Reishigata Dai Kimban).
- 11-12.—Chrysanthemum Crest Middle Silk Banners (Kikkashō Chū Kimban). Five on either side—green, yellow, red, white and purple.
- 13-14.—Chrysanthemum Crest Small Silk Banners (Kikkashō Shō Kimban). Five on either side—green, yellow, red, white and purple.
- 15-16.—Officials representing ancient guards of honor, armed with bows and arrows.
- 17-18.—Officials bearing bows, quivers with arrows, spears, swords and shields.
- 19-20.—Gongs.
- 21-22.—Drums.
- 23-24.—Spears.
- 25-26.—Banzai Banners.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, Taishō Yonen.

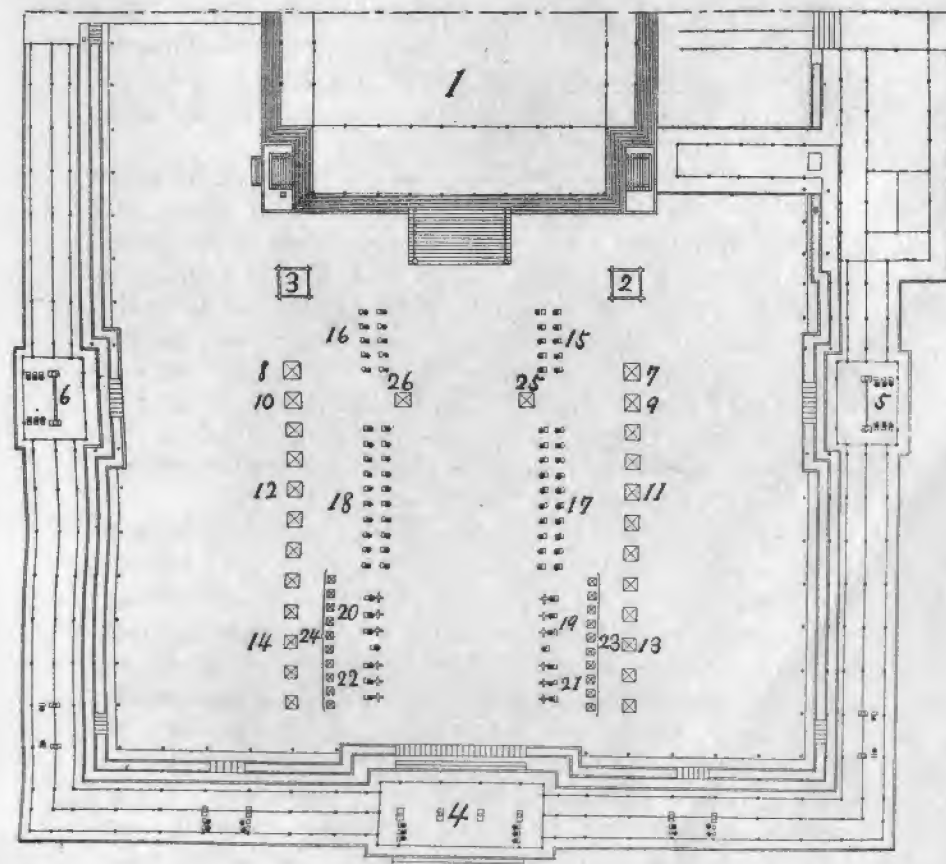


Diagram of Enthronement Ceremony of Shishin Den.  
See facing page.

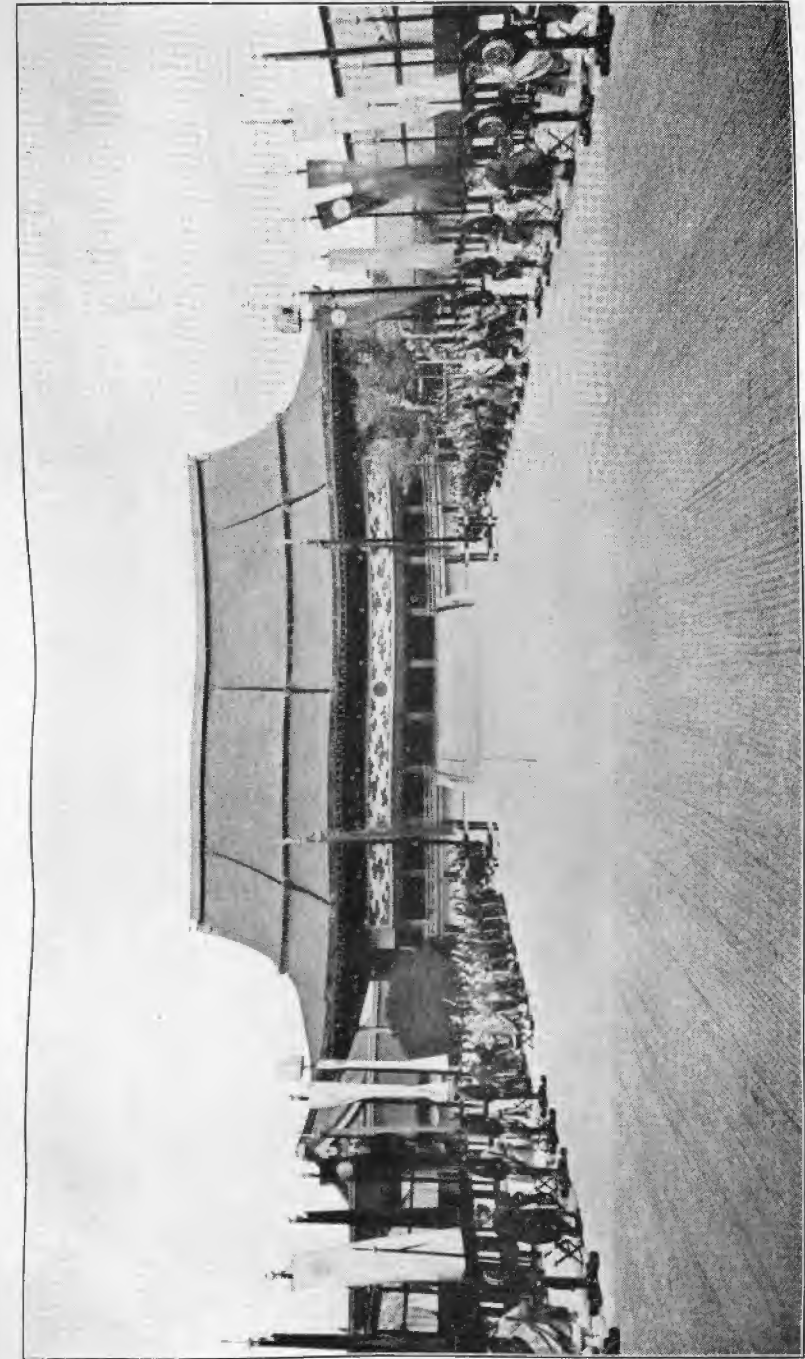


subjects from the north just as the polestar ruled the starry hosts of the heavens from that direction. Subjects stood to the southward of the Chinese Emperor, facing north. This is a procedure altogether unknown to original Japanese tradition. Japanese cosmogony and mythology alike are heliocentric. The Japanese Emperor is correctly the child of the sun, not the ruler from the north.

These Chinese ideas of the north as the place of honor and of the north star as the symbol of regal power and dignity have considerably influenced the Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies. They account for the fact that the Emperor mounts the throne from the north and faces the south when he addresses his people and receives the congratulations of their chief representative. They also account for the fact that the Shishin Den has a southern court and not a northern one, from the southern areas of which the assembled subjects and representatives of friendly nations must face the Emperor to the north.

Chinese influence on the Sokui Rei has not been confined to the aspects just mentioned. In the reign of Empress Suiko, who came to the throne in 593 A.D., Chinese civilization began to enter Japan in strength. The great reforms of the Taikwa Era (645-701 A.D.) were inspired by Chinese forms and carried out according to Chinese precedents. Then, as already pointed out, when we reach the reign of Emperor Tenchi (662-671 A.D.) the Enthronement Ceremony (Sokui Rei) became almost entirely Chinese. These continental influences continued dominant down to the opening of the modern period in 1868. During the long mediæval period of Japanese history the enthronement robes of the Emperor, the vestments of officials and other participating dignitaries, the banners standing in the Southern Court, the incense burned to announce to Heaven the accession of a new Emperor, in fact the entire proceedings—all were in imitation of Chinese originals.

Beginning with the revival of pure Japanese institutions that set in strongly at the opening of the Meiji Period, and which has continued ever since, an effort was made to repudiate this Chinese influence. Special legislation was



The Shishin Den. Within this building are the Thrones of the Emperor and the Empress. The Enthronement Banners are seen standing in the Southern Courtyard.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, *Taishō Yonen*.

enacted requiring that the Sokui Rei conform to ancient Japanese customs. Yet the fact remains that this part of the Enthronement Ceremonies is more Chinese in its historical affiliations than it is Japanese. It is not the original Japanese Enthronement ceremony. For this we must look to the Daijō Sai.

The Shishin Den is constructed entirely of Japanese cypress (*hinoki*). The roof is thatched with the bark of this same material. The floor is of polished wood. The entire building measures ninety *shaku* east and west, and sixty *shaku* north and south. It is approached from the southern side by a broad flight of eighteen steps, and from the western and eastern sides by narrower flights of nine steps each. The massive roof is supported by symmetrical rows of wooden columns. The outer balcony which encircles the building can be completely opened to the air, thus affording an easy view from the exterior of all that transpires within. In the center of the interior hall is placed the Throne.

The Imperial Throne from which the Emperor makes solemn announcement of the fact of his accession is called in Japanese the Takamikura,<sup>1</sup> which means "High August Seat." In ensemble it is a series of three stages from the highest of which rise eight pillars supporting an octagonal canopy. The woodwork is of *hinoki* heavily lacquered in black, and richly overlaid with fine metal work of gold and brass. The base is a massive, slightly oblong dais, twenty feet in width, eighteen in depth and three feet high. This is fenced about with a black lacquered railing embossed with golden Imperial sun crests. It is approached on the eastern, western and northern sides by broad steps which also glisten mirror-like in their finish of black lacquer. The northern approach is for the use of the Emperor alone. The Throne thus faces south toward the open court of the temple. Three broad panels adorn the front of the first dais. The central panel, which lies directly in front of and beneath the Imperial seat, bears a painted representation of the

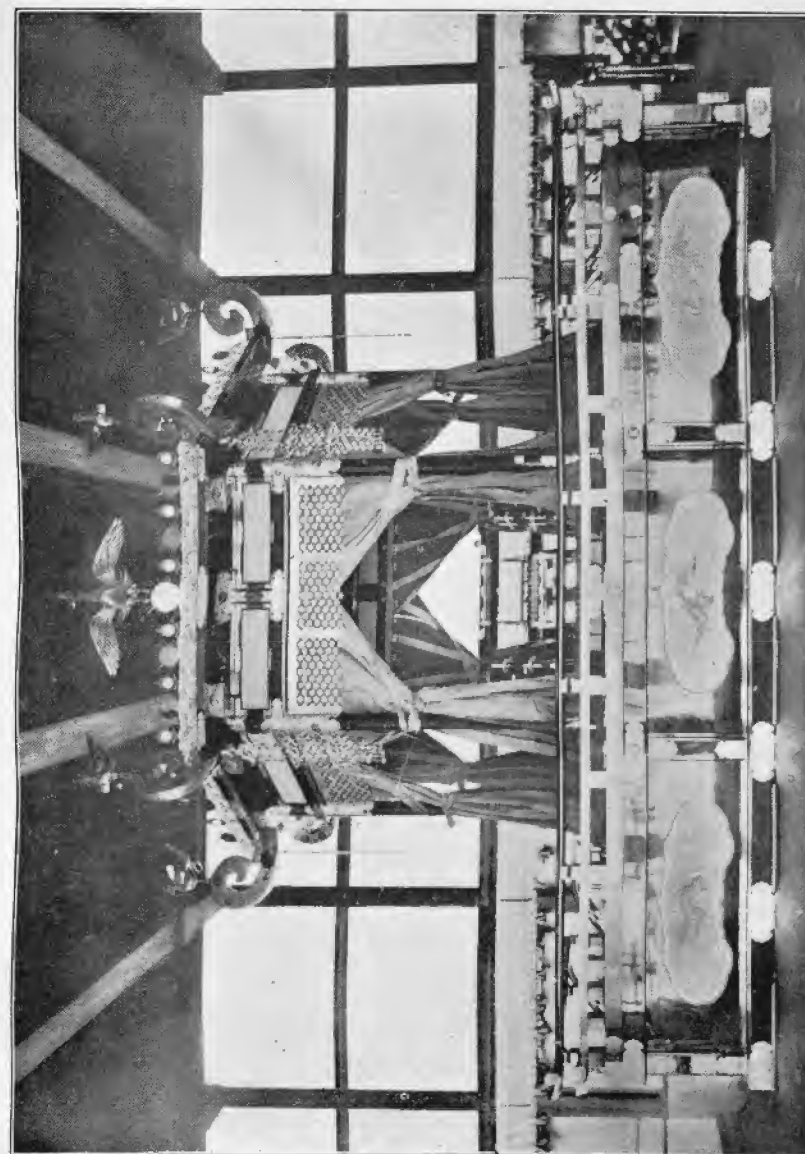
<sup>1</sup> The following description is based on the Takamikura used in the Sokui Rei of Taishō Tennō in 1915, and preserved in the Shishin Den of the Kyōto Palace. The same Throne will be used in the Enthronement of the reigning Emperor.

royal phoenix. Flanking this on either side are paintings of the fabulous dragon-headed *kirin*. On either side of each of the three stairways are similar *kirin* panels. Over the first stage is spread a covering of red brocade worked with a white peony design.

The second and third stages are octagonal in shape, the latter slightly smaller than the former, but set concentrically with it and with faces corresponding. The height of the second dais is about one foot. It is covered with a brocade of the same material as that of the first. On the third is spread a green brocade of design similar to that of the coverings of the two lower stages.

The eight pillars supporting the canopy rise from the corners of the third platform and pass into an octagonal-based flattened dome-like roof, resplendent in the brilliant black of lacquer and the yellow of metal work. The peak of the dome is capped by a small box-like dais called *roban*. Mounted on the *roban* and soaring with out-stretched wings over all, rises a great golden phoenix. The lines of the dome radiate in eight ridges from the *roban* at the center and, passing through the angles of the eaves, terminate in scrolls of a form which Japanese writers picturesquely compare with the curled sprouts of the young fern. Each scroll is elaborately embellished with metal work in a design dominated by the Imperial crest. Standing above each of the scrolls is a golden metal phoenix. Hanging from each scroll is a lacy pendant of fine metal work called a *gyokuban*. Above the center of each of the eight outer edges of the roof stands a large metal mirror with rays. Each of these mirrors is flanked with smaller mirrors and with globes made of gold and copper, called *hakugyuku*. Below these and passing in a band around the entire roof edge is a carved wave-like design colored in green lacquer.

The upper part of each of the eight faces between the eaves and the lintel is filled with paneling of green lattice work, bordered with a band of red. Suspended beneath this is a narrow curtain (*mokō*) of interlaced metal work of thinly pressed gold and copper. The design here again is dominated by the theme of the Imperial crest.



The Throne of the Emperor.

From *Tairō Shashinchō*, Taishō Yonen.



Hanging from within the dome across the octagonal faces of the canopy, and draped about the pillars in such a way as to permit of being drawn back to provide eight large pentagonal apertures affording access to the central platform, are heavy curtains of deep purple silk, ornamented with a raised hollyhock design in the same color. The curtains are lined with scarlet silk. Above the third dais are laid close together, side by side, two thick mats of straw (*tatami*) edged with brocade, striped with lines of red, green, blue, yellow, white and black, gradually shading from deeper to lighter colors. Above the *tatami* are spread, one over the other, three rugs of fine weave. The first is an embroidered rush matting bordered with Yamato brocade. The second is of soft Yamato brocade. The topmost rug is of brocade with a white ground ornamented with square shaped, conventionalized yellow butterfly and flower designs. Anciently the Emperor took his seat directly above these rugs. In more recent times a Throne-chair has been added. The chair is of red sandal wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl—broad-seated, squarely built, four legged and substantial. To the right and the left are stands for the Sacred Sword and Jewels. In the ceremony the Sword is placed on the Emperor's left, the jewels on his right. In the ceiling of the canopy, reflecting its light down upon the Throne-chair beneath, is a large mirror.

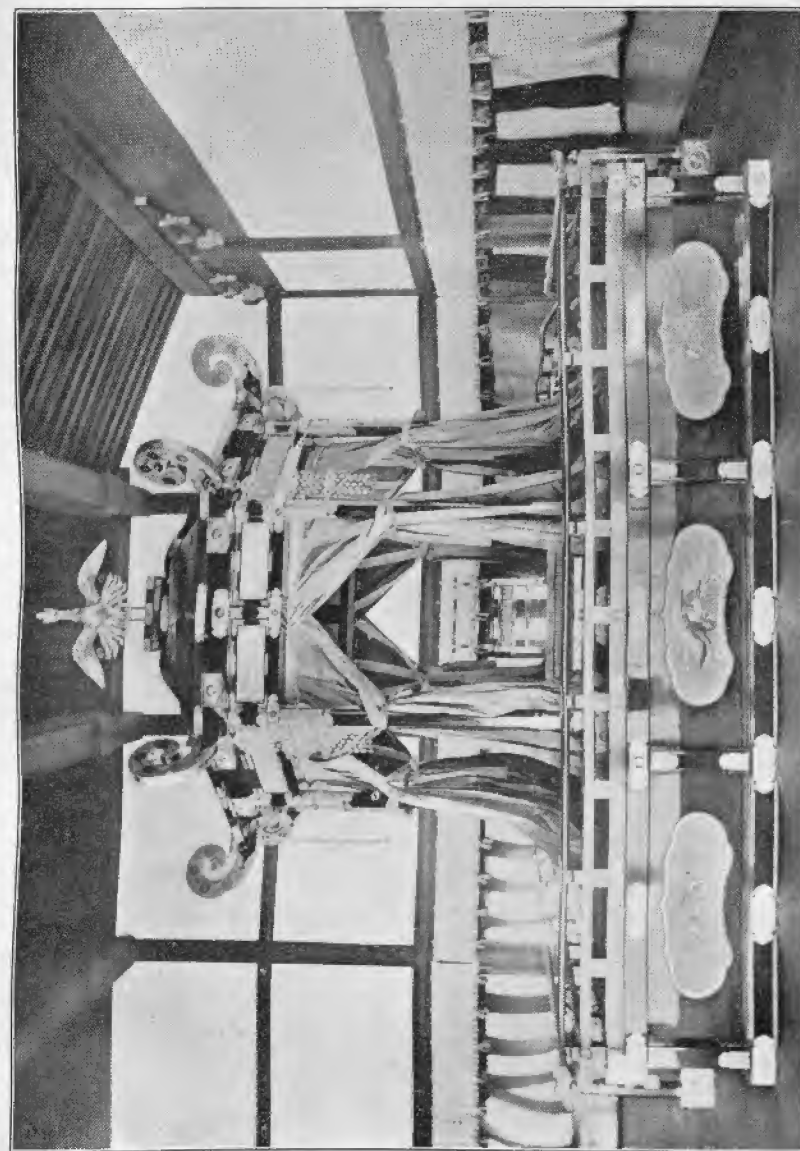
Just to the east of the Takamikura is placed the Throne of the Empress, called the Michōdai which means "The Curtained Throne." It is closely patterned after the Throne of the Emperor, but is smaller and has less ornamentation. It has the same three platforms with their background of black lacquer, the same octagonal canopy and the same approaches on the east, the west and the north. It lacks some of the more elaborate decorative details of the Takamikura, such as the golden phoenix above each of the eight scrolls at the eaves and the mirrors and *hakugyoku* around the lower edge of the roof. Its curtains are of light purple lined with red silk. The Michōdai did not appear in Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies prior to 1915.

Hanging beneath the southern eaves of the Shishin Den

and extending the entire length of the building is a *mokō* in the form of a long narrow horizontal curtain made of fine, heavy silk. The curtain is sufficiently wide to give good proportion to the whole and at the same time sufficiently narrow to hang entirely clear of the open spaces of the temple front. The background of the cloth is pure white, and against this in the center directly over the middle of the broad stairway is embroidered a golden sun. Worked into the cloth to the right and the left are *zuim*, or clouds of good omen in the five propitious colors—green, yellow, red, white and purple.

To the south of the Shishin Den is an open area called the *Nan Tei* or Southern Court, extending two hundred and twenty *shaku* east and west and one hundred and fifty *shaku* north and south. The Southern Court is bounded on the north by the Shishin Den and its approaches, and on the remaining sides by covered, earthen-floored corridors, called *Konro*. Here in these corridors and under temporary shelters adjoining them the invited guests take their stand. The court-yard is entered through the corridors by two gates on the east, two on the west and three on the south. The main gate on the east is called the *Nikka Mon* ("Sun Flower Gate"), that on the west, the *Gekkwa Mon* ("Moon Flower Gate") and that on the South the *Shōmei Mon* ("Light Receiving Gate"). On the outside of the corridors are hung silk curtains with multi-colored raised figures. On the inside are also hung curtains of brocade, rolled up so as to permit unobstructed view of the court-yard and the temple.

In the northern part of the court-yard close to the temple and to the east of the main stairway is placed a cherry tree (*sakura*) and to the west of the stairway a mandarin orange tree (*tachibana*). These are popularly called the *Sakon no Sakura* ("The Cherry Tree Near on the Left") and the *Ukon no Tachibana* ("The Orange Tree Near on the Right"), speaking from the point of view of the Emperor. They stand where Imperial guards (*Konoe*) stood in former times, and symbolically represent the guardian life of the Japanese nation near His Majesty's person. The cherry tree, in the transient passion of its blossoming, has been traditionally upheld as the symbol of



The Throne of the Empress.

From *Tairōi Shashinchō*, *Taiishō Yonen*.

the intense loyalty of the Japanese people. The orange tree is a tree of fragrance and to the Japanese represents birth-place and home. Thus in the symbolism of the trees the Emperor is guarded on the left and on the right by the loyalty and the homes of the nation.

Extending in a straight line southward from just in front of the cherry tree are set up twelve banners. The number corresponds to the number of months in the year. In similar position parallel with the former line and extending southward from the orange tree are placed twelve corresponding banners. If one stands in imagination in the center of the southern extremity of the court-yard facing the Throne, he sees farthest away among the banners on the right closest to the cherry tree, a large banner of heavy, red silk, bearing in its upper part a representation of the sun, embroidered in threads of gold. Surmounting the pole of the banner is a device called a *shaguma*, or "plume." In this particular case it consists of a large, globe-like object falling into streamers in the lower part. Its color is gold, suggesting a representation of the sun with rays. This banner is called the *Nichi zō Tōban* or the "Sun Image Plume Banner" and was anciently regarded as the Emperor's own standard.

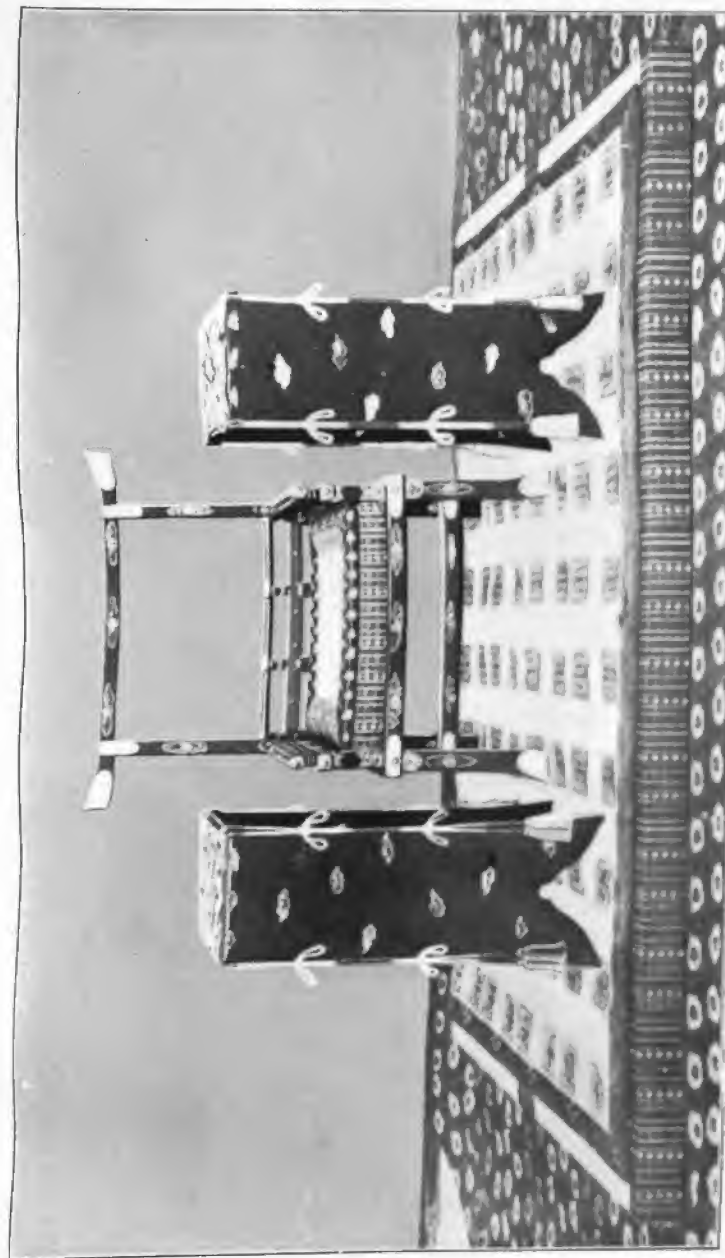
In corresponding position in the line of banners to the left and standing just in front of the orange tree is a banner identical in form with the sun banner, but made of white silk, embroidered with a silver moon and capped with a silver *shaguma*. This is the *Getsu zō Tōban*, or the "Moon Image Plume Banner."

Next in position to the south of the Sun Banner is the "Great Silk Banner of the Yata Crow" (*Yata Karasu Dai Kimban*). Against a background of red silk are worked the designs of the five clouds of good omen in red, yellow, white, green and purple. The pole of the standard ends in a forked golden spear. In the upper field is embroidered a large, black crow with wings extended as if in swift flight. The representation of a flying crow here on one of the Enthronement banners is based on an old Japanese legend which relates how when the first Emperor Jimmu Tennō



was passing from Kumano to Yoshino in hitherto little known regions of Yamato, he and his troops became bewildered by the trackless forests and the precipitous mountains and were unable to make headway. Then the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, sent the Yata Crow, which, flying down from the Void, went before Jimmu Tennō and his army and guided them safely to their journey's end. Similar legends of a crow that lives in the sun or that journeys to and from the sun are of wide distribution among other peoples and of great antiquity. Such conceptions have been found in China, Asia Minor, Egypt and elsewhere. When the Egyptian ruler died the Imperial Sun crow that had resided with him during his reign, returned to the sun, but came back to earth again to make its abode with the new ruler. The Chinese have preserved an ancient legend of a red crow with three legs that lives in the sun. Prior to the Meiji Period the Yata Crow represented on the Japanese Imperial Enthronement Banner had three legs. In the revival of the things of Old Japan introduced at the opening of the Meiji Period, this three-legged representation was changed to that now used. It is highly probable, however, that the original Japanese conception of the Imperial Sun Crow was of a supernatural creature with three legs. The symbolism of the Yata Crow Banner, interpreted in the light of the data of early Japanese mythology, means that the new Emperor is being guided on his unknown way as was Jimmu Tennō of old by the messenger of the Deity of the Sun.

To the south of the Moon Banner in a position corresponding with that of the Crow Banner, stands the "Great Silk Banner of the Sacred Kite" (*Reishi Gata Dai Kimban*). The body of the banner consists of a background of white against which are designed again the five-colored clouds of good omen. At the top of the banner is a large, golden kite surrounded by golden sun rays. In Japanese mythology the kite is also a sun bird. One of the legends concerning the subjection of Yamato by Jimmu Tennō relates how in a certain place the Imperial forces fought long and hard with the enemy, but were unable to gain a victory. Then there appeared a wondrous golden kite which perched on the end



The Throne Chair. The stand to the left of the Emperor as he sits on the Throne is for the Sacred Sword, that on the right is for the Sacred Jewels.

From *Taira Kiroku*, Taihō Yemra.

of the Emperor's bow. "The lustre of the kite was of dazzling brightness, so that its appearance was like that of lightning" (Nihongi). The enemy were bewildered and weakened in the dazzling light and were easily overcome by the troops of the Emperor. The symbolism of the Kite Banner means that the new Emperor will be aided by the irresistible might of the Sun Goddess in overcoming all enemies.

On the right and on the left, to the south of the Yata Crow Banner and of the Kite Banner, stand the "Chrysanthemum Crest Middle<sup>1</sup> Silk Banners" (*Kikukashō Chū Kimban*), five on the one hand and five on the other. Each banner in the series is in one of the five colors of good omen. In order of succession from north to south the colors run—green,<sup>2</sup> yellow, red, white and purple. The same sequence is observed in both lines. Near the top of each banner is embroidered an Imperial Chrysanthemum Crest of sixteen petals in gold. This crest which is peculiarly the emblem of the Imperial Family is in origin a sun symbol. Similar sun emblems with sixteen petals adorned the royal palaces of Babylon. At the apex of the pole of each standard is a single-headed, golden spear.

Groups of five additional banners on either side complete the two lines. These final standards are called the "Chrysanthemum Crest Small Silk Banners" (*Kikuka Mon Shō Kimban*) and are identical with the banners just described in form, color and sequence in line. The only difference is that they are of slightly smaller dimensions.

The most conspicuous standards in the entire courtyard have yet to be described. These are the *Banzai no Hata* or the "Banners of Ten Thousand Years." They express in silken symbol the shout of the nation that the Emperor live and reign forever. They are two in number and stand not in direct line with the other banners but are placed facing each other some feet within the area marked off by these two lines. The Banzai Banner on the right stands in front of the space between the Yata Banner and the first of the

<sup>1</sup> "Middle" here refers to size.

<sup>2</sup> In the Enthronement Ceremonies of Taishō Tennō this was blue. It has been changed to green for the ceremonies of the reigning Emperor.

Chrysanthemum Banners, while the Banzai Banner on the left is in similar position on front of the space between the Banner of the Sacred Kite and the first Chrysanthemum Banner on the left.

The main field of each Banzai Banner is of red brocade. Upon this background slightly above the center is embroidered in gold the Chinese characters for *Banzai*, meaning, as just indicated "Ten Thousand Years." Above the *Banzai* ideograms is embroidered in brown silk thread a *sake* jar of primitive design. The original is a jar that has been carefully preserved from very ancient times in the Ishigami Shrine of the country of Yamato. Above the jar are embroidered five silver fish called *ayu* swimming in silver waves. At the top of each standard is a golden trident. The explanation of the embroidered devices is also in a legend connected with the early conquests of the first Emperor. The Nihongi says that Emperor Jimmu in order to foreknow by divination the results of his expedition against the bandits of Yamato, "made a vow saying:—'I will now take the sacred jars and sink them in the River Nifu. If the fishes, whether great or small, become every one drunken and are carried down the stream, like as it were to floating *maki* leaves, then shall I assuredly succeed in establishing this land. But if this be not so, there will never be any result.' Thereupon he sank the jars in the river with their mouths downward. After a while the fish all came floating to the surface, gaping and gasping as they floated down the stream. . . . It was with this that the custom began of setting sacred jars."<sup>3</sup>

The symbolism of the Banzai Banners means, then, a divinely inspired assurance that the Emperor will settle on a sure and permanent basis the affairs of the land.

Standing before each of the two groups of smaller five-colored banners are three gongs and three drums, making six instruments of percussion on either side. Each of these is hung in a rounded, wooden frame supported on a square, upright post with four branching feet at its base. The

<sup>3</sup> Aston, *Nihongi* I, 121.

rounded frames are carved and colored to represent rising flames. On either side between the drums and gongs and the smaller colored banners are ten spear standards. The guard of each spear is of gold, the blade of silver, the shaft of black lacquered wood. A small red silk banner hangs from each spear head, bearing in its center a gold colored design consisting of three comma like objects arranged in circular form called *mitsu domoe*.

The following outline of the order of procedure in the Shishin Den Ceremony adheres closely to the statement issued by the Japanese government in its Enthronement Regulations.

Early in the afternoon guards of honor take up their positions outside the Kenrei and the Kenshin Gates leading into the palace grounds. At the appointed hour higher civil and military officials and their ladies, members of the nobility and their ladies, other dignitaries of high rank and their ladies, and representatives of foreign countries and their ladies assemble outside the Nikka and the Gekka Gates leading to the corridors about the Southern Court of the Shishin Den. Those who are to participate directly in the ceremonies wear ancient ceremonial robes, the men carrying swords. Then higher officials of the Enthronement Commission (*Taireishi Kōtōkan*), thirty in all, take their positions as guards of honor without the gates of the Shishin Den. Then from the Nikka Gate on the east six officials of Han-nin rank, led by a *Taireishi Kōtōkan* pass to their positions behind the gongs and drums in the eastern line. Six officials similarly led pass from the Gekka Gate to positions behind the drums and banners in the western line. Next twenty officials of high rank (*Taireishi Kōtōkan*) from each of the above gates enter and take positions before the Middle Banners of five colors. These are bearers of ceremonial objects, consisting of swords, bows and arrows, spears and shields. Immediately following these ten higher officials of the Enthronement Commission (*Taireishi Kōtōkan*) enter from each of the above gates and take places before the Cherry Tree on the right and the Orange Tree on the left. They represent ancient Imperial Guards (called *Sau*



*Konoe*) and accordingly are armed with bows, arrows and swords.

After the above named dignitaries, seventy-four in number, robed according to group in fine silks of many colors, have taken their places before the two parallel lines of banners, the gongs and the drums are sounded simultaneously three times. All stand in assigned places. Then, guided by *Taireishi Kōtōkan* the guests awaiting without the *Nikka* and *Gekka* Gates enter and take their appointed places in the Southern Court, some within the eastern and western areas of the *Shishin Den* itself. Next, the Grand Master of Ceremonies and the Vice-Grand Master of Ceremonies, followed by Court Ritualists take their places within the southwestern part of the temple. Next, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Imperial Household Department take their places within the temple nearer the Throne than the preceding officials. Then the Princes of the Blood take places within the temple just before the Throne.

When all are in place, Masters of Ceremony by a warning cry give notice of the approach of the Emperor. Then the Emperor mounts the Throne by the northern stairs. Chamberlains (*Jiju*) place the Sacred Sword and the Sacred Jewels on the stands beside the Throne-chair, and present the Emperor with a baton (*shaku*). The Minister of the Imperial Household then ascends the first dais of the Throne and takes his place as honorary guard outside the curtains to the northwest of the Throne-chair. The Grand Chamberlain of the Imperial Household, Chamberlains, the Chief Aide de Camp of the Emperor and Aides de Camp likewise take places as guards of honor on the main floor of the Temple behind the Throne.

Next, the Empress and her retinue enter. The Empress mounts her Throne by the northern stairs and a Court Lady hands her the ceremonial fan (*hisen*). Princesses of the Blood take their places just before the Throne of the Empress and Court Ladies take places as guards of honor on the main floor of the Temple behind the Throne.

Next, two Chamberlains, one by the eastern stairs and one by the western, ascend the first dais of the Throne and

open the curtains, and then return to their places. Following this, two Court Ladies, one by the eastern stairs and one by the western, ascend the first dais of the Throne of the Empress and open the curtains, and then resume their places. The Emperor and Empress appear seated on their Throne-chairs.

Then the Emperor, holding his *shaku* before him, stands. Immediately, the Empress rises, holding her fan before her.

All present make profound obeisance.

The Prime Minister then descends from within the *Shishin Den* by the western stairs and proceeds to a place in the Southern Courtyard between the banners and facing the Emperor.

The Emperor, still standing, reads an Imperial Rescript.

The Prime Minister then mounts the main stairs to a position beneath the southern eaves just before the Throne, and facing the Emperor, delivers on behalf of the nation, an address of felicitation.

The Prime Minister then withdraws to a position midway between the two *Banzai* Banners and leads the assembly of Princes, Princesses, nobility, officials, dignitaries, and representatives of foreign nations in three shouts of *Banzai* for the Emperor. This salutation is carefully timed to the second and the exact instant at which it will occur is made known throughout the nation. Simultaneously with the shouts that go up before the *Shishin Den*, waiting groups throughout the length and breadth of the land join their voices in a nation-wide shout of "Banzai! Banzai! Banzai!" to the new Representative of the Unbroken Line.

Following this, the Prime Minister resumes his place within the *Shishin Den*. Two Chamberlains then mount the stairs of the Imperial Throne, one from the east and one from the west, and close the curtains, and then return to their places. Two Court Ladies then mount the stairs of the Throne of the Empress, one from the east and one from the west, and close the curtains, and then resume their places.

The Emperor and Empress then retire. The Imperial withdrawal is announced by a cry of warning from the Masters of Ceremony. Drums and gongs are sounded three times. This is the signal that the Great Ceremony is ended and that all may retire.

On this same day at the Shin Den and the Kōrei Den of the Imperial Palace of Tōkyō messengers announce the ceremony to the Spirits of the Imperial Ancestors and to the Gods of Heaven and Earth.

At Kyōto on the day following the Sokui Ceremony sacred dances (*Kagura*), are held before the Kashiko Dokoro. Both Emperor and Empress attend.

## CHAPTER VII

### PREPARATIONS FOR THE DAIJŌ SAI

The Daijō Sai is the most important celebration of Shintō. It is also one of the most ancient. In it appear rites that antedate all written Japanese history. It is the most archaic and picturesque of all the ceremonies connected with the Enthronement, and at the same time, the most replete with valuable anthropological and historical data. It is performed once at the beginning of the reign of each new Emperor. In it are merged a primitive harvest festival and survivals of the original Japanese Enthronement rites. As pointed out earlier in the discussion, prior to the enthronement ceremonies of Emperor Taishō in 1915 the Daijō Sai was not performed at the time of the Sokui Rei, but sometimes in the autumn immediately succeeding this latter ceremony, sometimes in the autumn of the next year following, and sometimes even later.

The word Daijō Sai is the Sino-Japanese rendering of two ideograms which are used to write an original and independent expression of old Yamato speech read Oho Nihe Matsuri (Ō Nie Matsuri). The word appears also in the literature in the variant forms Oho Nahe Matsuri, Oho Name Matsuri and Oho Mube Matsuri. The element *Oho* which appears in all these titles is honorific, and is translated "Great." *Matsuri* means "Festival," *Nihe*, *Nahe*, *Name* and *Mube* all have reference to new food. The great Eighteenth Century scholar, Motoori Norinaga, explains *Nihe* as a contraction of *Nihe-ahe*, meaning "new food." On good authority then, Daijō Sai, or Oho Nihe Matsuri, may be taken to mean "Great New Food Festival."

Each year, on the twenty-third of November the Japanese people celebrate the Nii Name Matsuri—the Festival of New Food. It is a legal holiday, observed with appropriate ceremonies at Shintō shrines. It is the great autumn harvest festival, when after the rice crop has been

safely gathered in, the people give thanks to the Kami that watch over seed time and harvest. In the Imperial Palace at a special ceremony the Emperor offers the first fruits to the gods and then, himself, partakes of the new rice. The origins of this annual autumn harvest festival are identical with the festival of new food that appears in connection with the Daijō Sai. A close relationship between the two may be seen in the fact that when the Daijō Sai is celebrated the Niiname Matsuri is merged with it, that is, the performance of the former is regarded as taking the place of the latter. As far as harvest festival aspects alone are concerned, the Daijō Sai may be correctly regarded as an enlarged Niiname Matsuri.

Another important item of evidence pointing toward the original identity of these two festivals is to be found in the fact that in the earliest known periods of Japanese history no distinction whatsoever was made between the use of the terms Oho Nihe Matsuri (Daijō Sai) which is now used exclusively of the food ceremony of the Enthronement and Nihi Nahe Matsuri (Niiname Matsuri) which has come down to us as the name of the November harvest festival. A distinction between the use of the two terms does not appear in the literature until the time of Seiwa Tennō (859-876 A.D.). In the beginning, the Oho Nihe Matsuri was the annual harvest festival, observed not merely by the Emperor and his Court, but by the ordinary people as well. It was a time of feasting both gods and men with new food. The new food was not confined merely to rice, but included all edible things such as grains, vegetables, fruits, fish, fowl and meats.

In the Daijō Sai of the present are revived many of the old precautionary practices that existed in primitive Japan as part of normal procedure in the sowing of grain, the cultivation and the gathering of the crops and the final celebration of the harvest. It is the reappearance of these rites out of the remote past that makes the study of the Daijō Sai of particular interest to the student of social origins.

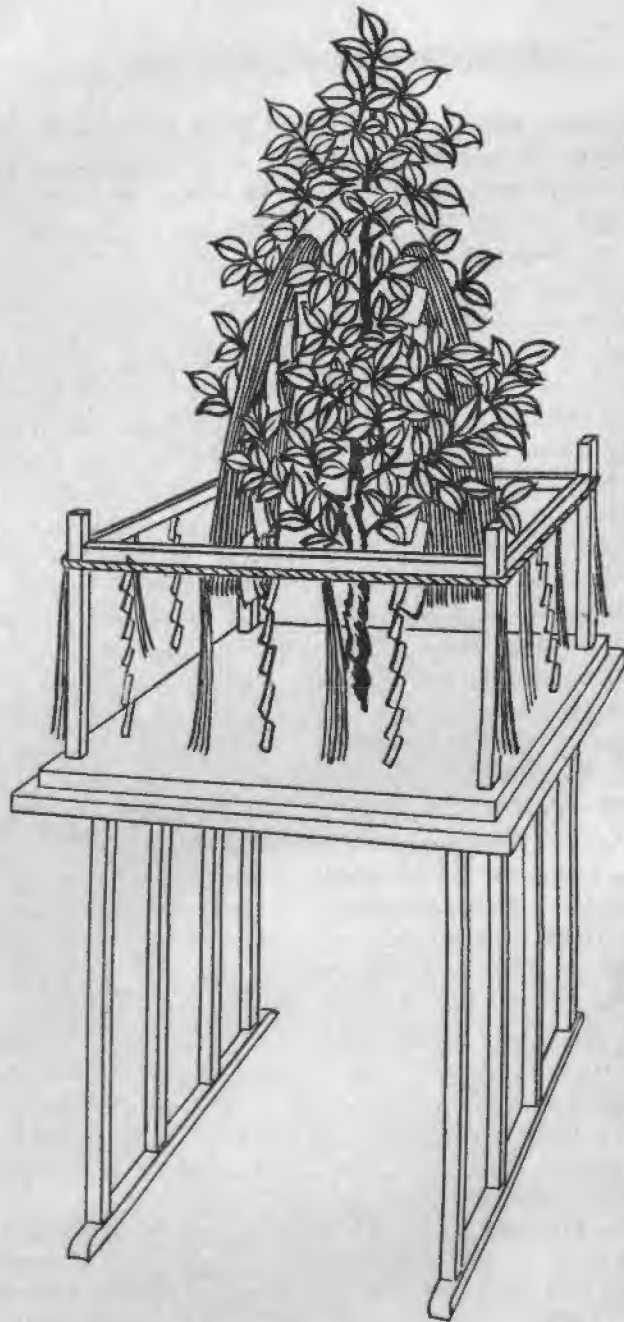
Many of the important observances relating to the Daijō Sai are to be found in connection with preparations

for the great event. It is impossible within the limits of the present discussion to consider these preparatory ceremonies and procedures in detail. In what follows, only the most important of the steps leading up to the Daijō Sai proper are sketched in brief outline. Not all of these are merely the revival of ancient forms, and not all relate to the cultivation and the harvesting of the rice to be used in the final rites. A significant part of the preparations consists in the application of the most modern scientific knowledge to the cultivation of the rice. Certain of the preparatory ceremonies concern the persons who will participate in the Daijō Sai, certain others are related to lands and buildings to be used therein.

The first important ceremony preparatory to the Daijō Sai which should be noted here is the selection by divination of two districts in which the rice for the Emperor's food ritual is to be grown. Two different districts are determined upon for the reason that the food ritual itself is carried out in duplicate ceremonies. The central rites of the Daijō Sai are performed in two small buildings that reproduce in general the simple architecture of the dwellings of the Emperors of primitive Japan. One building is called the Yuki Hall (Yuki Den) and the other the Suki Hall (Suki Den). They are of identical construction, built side by side, and the services performed in them are the same. An account of these structures and a statement of the possible meanings of Yuki and Suki will be given later when the Daijō Sai ritual itself is taken up for consideration. For each of these two Halls separate rice fields are provided. Each of these rice growing districts is designated by the name of the Hall to which it is attached. Thus the Yuki District raises rice to be made into food offerings and *sake* for the service in the Yuki Hall, while the Suki District provides the grain for the service in the Suki Hall.

The Divination Ceremony for determining the Yuki and the Suki Districts of the Daijō Sai of the reigning Emperor was performed at the Tōkyō Imperial Palace on Feb. 5, 1928. The day selected was a "lucky day," a *kichijitsu*, being the first day after Setsubun, or the division



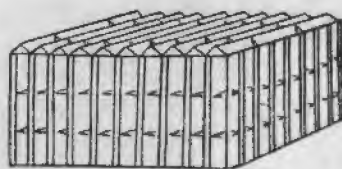


Himorogi.

of the seasons between winter and spring. Before the Shrine of the Gods of Heaven and Earth (Shin Den) was constructed a "Divination Shelter" in the form of a temporary thatched structure measuring nine *shaku* across the front and eighteen *shaku* in depth. About it was hung a light blue curtain. Within the Shelter was placed a Himorogi and before this the ceremony which links the present with the past was performed. The Himorogi probably represents the most primitive Shintō shrine. It consists of a branch of the sacred evergreen tree of Shintō, called Sakaki (*Cleyera Japonica*) hung with streamers of hemp and paper and surrounded by a small fence hung with the same materials. The entire device is often mounted on an eight-legged table. In the divination service three tables for offerings are placed before the Himorogi and in front of these a rush mat (*sugomo*) is laid. In front of the Divination Shelter clean sand is spread. This sanded area is called the Divination Garden (*Ura Niwa*).

When all preparations have been completed, at the appointed day and hour, the Chief Ritualist of the Imperial Court, the Chairman of the Enthronement Commission, high officials of the Enthronement Commission, and other high dignitaries and officiating ritualists take their places before the Shin Den. The first movement of the ceremony is the carrying out of the ordinary ritual of Shintō worship before the Deities of Heaven and Earth. While Kagura Uta is being rendered the doors of the shrine are opened, food and drink offerings are presented and the Chief Ritualist reads a prayer (*norito*).

Immediately following this the divination service proper is performed. The actual divining rites take place on the sanded area before the Divination Shelter. At the close of the worship before the Shin Den the Chief Ritualist and other priests pass to their position for performing divination. A ceremonial box made of willow wood and containing writing material is placed on one of the tables within the Shelter. A *norito* is then read summoning two ancient deities of divination named Ame-no-Koyane-no-Mikoto and Futo-Tama-no-Mikoto to come down into the Himorogi.



Box of Willow Wood, tied together with strings.

Then while soft music is played, a ritualist who has been carefully prepared in mind and body by three days of special purification rites, kindles a fire by rubbing together two pieces of *hinoki* ("fire-tree"). He catches the spark of pure fire thus created on some specially prepared wood and then, when the flames burn up strongly, holds a tortoise shell over them until it is crackled by the heat. During this period all of those present, and particularly the ritualists conducting the rites, endeavor to keep their spirits calmly receptive to the divine influences with which the place is filled. The shell upon which the Kami reveal their will is cut in a shape that roughly resembles the form of a tortoise. The lower part is square, the upper part is triangular suggesting the head of the creature. The shell measures five *sun* in width and eight *sun* at the longest dimension. The markings on the shell are read according to a traditional secret formula, and the indication of the will of the Kami thus determined is written on a paper, sealed and placed in the box before the Himorogi. After this Kagura Uta is again rendered and the gods are returned to Heaven. Later the box containing the written revelation is handed over to the Chairman of the Enthronement Commission who opens and reads the report. He makes known the result to the Prime Minister, who in turn reports to the Emperor.

In such wise it was revealed as the divine will that, in the Shōwa Enthronement Ceremonies, Shiga Prefecture, which comprises the country surrounding Lake Biwa to the east of Kyōto, should be the Yuki District, and that Fukuoka Prefecture in northern Kyūshū should be the Suki District. Shiga Prefecture has been selected repeatedly in the past as the Yuki District; Fukuoka Prefecture, and in fact the Island of Kyūshū as a whole, is favored with the divine choice for the first time in history. The divination ceremony just outlined determines only the general prefectural areas within which the sacred rice shall be grown. The actual

choice of the precise land to be cultivated is left to the decision of the governor of the prefecture concerned.

Reliance on divine guidance in determining the most favorable places wherein to grow the sacred rice is supplemented by wise human precautions. Detailed instructions to be applied in the selection and the cultivation of the *Saiden*, or Sacred Fields, were issued by the national Department of Agriculture and Forestry on February 9, 1928. A summary of these regulations follows. The fields selected must belong to rural families possessed of the double blessings of adequate property and sound health. The area of the patch to be cultivated must be about five *tan* [a *tan* is almost exactly one-fourth of an English acre]. The land must be so distributed as to make it possible to cultivate it as a unified piece. It must be convenient for transportation, and protected as far as possible from the risks of flood and storm. It must be near to a river so as to facilitate the carrying out of the necessary purification ceremonies. It must possess advantages both from the points of view of irrigation and drainage. It must be situated in a district that is advanced in agricultural knowledge and that enjoys a reputation for benevolence as well as for other good manners and customs. Districts having local maladies and places that have recently been visited by epidemics of contagious diseases must be avoided.

After applying all these precautions it was determined on March 15, 1928, that the Yuki Field should be a particular spot in Mikami Village of Yasu County (*Gun*) in Shiga Prefecture, and that the Suki Field should be a particular spot in Wakiyama Village of Sagara County in Fukuoka Prefecture.

Directions for cultivating the Sacred Fields are fully as detailed and explicit as those relating to selection just summarized. The yield from the fields must be handed over to the Ritualists of the Imperial Household Department at Kyōto by October seventeenth. Between the time of harvesting and of delivering at Kyōto the grains must be prepared in various ways. This necessitates the harvesting of the crop between September fifteenth and twentieth.

Accordingly, the seeds selected must be of a variety that ripens earlier than is ordinarily the case. Such early rice is not commonly grown in Japan because of the fact that early ripening lessens the yield. Thus because the rice used in the Daijō Sai is of a variety that ripens early, the planting takes place a week or more earlier than in the case of ordinary rice, and transplanting is performed at least two weeks earlier than ordinary transplanting. Fertilizers and methods of cultivation adopted are all directed to hastening the fruition.

Further regulations specify such details as permission to employ cattle and horses in cultivation, prohibition against using manure as fertilizer, and instructions that the men and women who engage in the cultivation shall be clean in person and wear unsoiled garments. Care must also be taken in cultivation to avoid injury to the crops by birds, insects or disease. The fields are protected from winds by making the surrounding embankments high, also by erecting screens of bamboo mats and by stretching light ropes between the rows of growing plants to prevent their being blown over in the wind. Surrounding the fields are high fences of interwoven bamboo. Prior to beginning cultivation, the seed beds, the fields, the implements of agriculture, the seeds, the fertilizers and all persons engaging in the labor of cultivation are carefully purified by Shintō rites. After the harvest and the separation of the grain from the stalks elaborate care is given to hulling, cleaning and polishing. Following a preliminary cleaning the rice is placed in bags of linen or of cotton and carefully rubbed by hand until the hulls are removed. It is then with painstaking care sorted over by hand one grain at a time, and all defective or broken kernels removed. Afterwards it is placed in bags of white silk (*habutae*) and once more rubbed by hand until thoroughly cleansed and polished. About a week is given to this labor by the students of local schools and by members of young men's associations.

Between the time of the selection of the Sacred Fields and the final presentation of the yield of the harvest at Kyōto, various religious ceremonies are carried out in connec-

tion with the growing and preparation of the rice. Between the middle and the end of April the Ceremony of Purifying the Sacred Fields (*Saiden no Shūbatsu Shiki*) is performed. This is followed by the Ceremony of Breaking Ground (*Kuwaire Shiki*), and this in turn by the Ceremony of Planting (*Tane Maki Shiki*). Also toward the end of April is carried out the so-called *Mi na Guchi Sai* ("Water Mouth Ceremony") for the purification of waters entering the fields and the securing of their influx in exactly the right amounts. This is followed at the end of May or the first of June by the Rice Planting Ceremony (*Mita Ue Shiki*) when the young plants are transferred from the seed-beds to the paddy fields. In the middle of August there takes place the *Saijō Jichin Sai* in which the land to be used for the buildings and sacred areas (*saijō*) in the rites of gathering the grain is consecrated. In the middle of September occurs the "Ceremony of Plucking the Grain Heads" (*Nukiho Shiki*). Finally in the middle of October the Ceremony of Presenting the New Grain (*Shinkoku Kyōnō Shiki*) is carried out at Kyōto.

The most important of these observances is the *Nukiho Shiki*, the Ceremony of Plucking the Grain Heads. When the rice is ripe Imperial Commissioners are sent to the Sacred Fields from the Imperial Household Department and the ceremony of gathering the grain is carried out. In ancient times these commissioners—called *Nukiho Zukai*, "Ear-plucking Messengers"—were selected by divination in the Department of Shintō Rites from among the members of the Shintō priesthood. On arrival at the localities of the Sacred Fields they went in company with the local officials to the river near which each of the fields was situated and carried out elaborate purification ceremonies. The ancient harvest rites were very complicated, and various functionaries and forms appeared which have been eliminated in the modern procedure. After the purification ceremony the participants went in procession, with the Imperial Commissioner at their head, to the Sacred Field and a young unmarried woman, bearing the title of *Saka tsu Ko*, or "Sake-Child" gathered the first stalks. The rice of the four bunches



first gathered was used in the great communion meal carried out between the Emperor and the Kami in the food ritual of the Daijō Sai. The remainder was used for white and black *sake*. The entire plant was plucked, one stalk at a time, hence the designation *nukiho*, from *nuku*, "to pluck up," and *ho*, "grain head." The rice stalks were gathered in bundles and placed in specially prepared baskets, one bundle to each basket. Two baskets constituted a load. Each basket was decked with Sakaki branches and streamers of white bark-paper to mark the sacred character of the contents and to protect the rice from contamination. Then in a stately procession, headed and followed by priests, the baskets were carried to the capital.

As compared with ancient procedure, the modern ceremony is considerably simplified. The ceremony proper is performed on the western side of the Sacred Field. Here a consecrated area, called the Saijō, is marked out and in its very center is built a small god-house, named the Yashin Den, or the Hall of the Eight Gods. The structure measures twelve *shaku* across the front and fifteen *shaku* in depth. It is made of unbarked wood, thatched with *Miscanthus*, and with walls of rush matting. It faces the east. Here are worshipped eight ancient gods of food. Just to the north of the Yashin Den is erected with the same kind of materials a second small shrine called the Inami no Ya, the "Rice Fruit House." The building measures twelve *shaku* in width and nine in depth. It is entered from the north. A point in connection with this building that should be noted with particular care is that it has no "God-seat" (*Shinza*), that is to say, it is without the interior sanctuary wherein the enshrined Kami is believed to find residence. In the place of the god-seat are ceremonial stands for holding the new grain. The god of this shrine is the new rice itself, or rather the Rice Spirit. Three other small buildings stand on the consecrated area.

When everything is ready the Imperial Commissioner, followed by priests and participating dignitaries, all robed in ceremonial garments, proceeds to the central sanctuary and offers a *norito* announcing the rice gathering ceremony.

The eight gods of food are worshipped. The Imperial Commissioner then gives command to the governor of the prefecture that the harvest begin. The governor gives command to the Owner of the Field (*Ōta Nushi*). Then the *Ōta Nushi* and a group of harvesters dressed in the simple garb of the peasantry of ancient times, enter the field and pluck up by the roots several bunches of the ripened grain. These first fruits are placed on ceremonial stands in the consecrated area, and at the request of the governor the Imperial Commissioner conducts an examination thereof. This concluded, the trays are taken by the *Ōta Nushi* and placed in the Rice Fruit House. Then all present worship, the gods are sent back to Heaven and the service is concluded.

The remainder of the crop is harvested by ordinary modern methods.

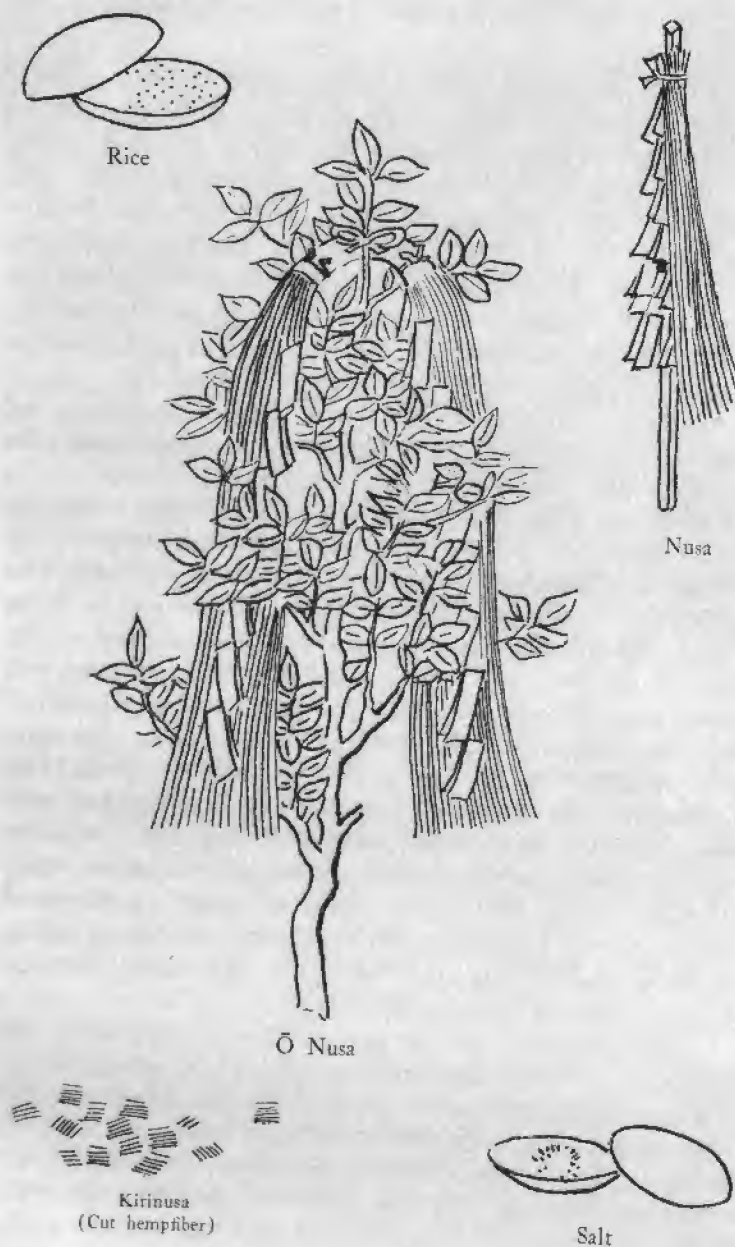
After the elaborate processes of cleaning, hulling, sorting, re-cleaning and polishing already described have been completed the rice is placed in sacks of double white linen. These are then deposited in long four-legged ceremonial boxes, (called *Karabitsu*), carried on poles, and taken to the railroad. Here the boxes are placed in a car constructed especially for the purpose by the Railway Bureau and transported to Kyōto. The railroad car is made in two compartments, providing a room for the Sacred Rice in the forepart, and quarters for attendants in the rear. The *Karabitsu* are taken from the car at Kyōto and carried by young men through the purified streets of the city and after a final purification ceremony, are lodged in the Sacred Store House (*Saiko*) within the Palace grounds.<sup>1</sup> This store house is arranged with northern and southern sections. The southern part is for the rice to be used in the food ritual of the Yuki Den, the northern part for the rice of the Suki Den ceremony. Around the building is a bamboo fence and at the entrance a *torii*. The store house is in reality a shrine and the rice is treated as Kami.

<sup>1</sup> In all three *koku* of polished rice and five *shō* of unpolished rice are delivered. A *koku* equals about 5.13 bushels. A *shō* is about 1.58 quarts. The white and the black *sake* for the Daijō Sai are brewed within the grounds of the Kamo Wake Ikadzuchi Shrine of Kyōto.

Another important ceremony preparatory to the Daijō Sai is the Jichin Sai, meaning the "Land Tranquilization Ceremony." It is otherwise known as the Toko Shizume no Matsuri. The object of the service is to purify and make ready the sites of the Yuki Den and of the Suki Den. The ceremony is carried out in August prior to the erection of these two shrines. It is an act of worship directed toward the guardian Kami of the locality, who preside over the earth on which these two buildings are to stand, and is interpreted by the modern ritualists as a prayer that the ground may be firm and subject to not even the slightest tremor of earthquake.

Just before the Daijō Sai two important ceremonies of purification are carried out, one of the person of the Emperor, the other of the members of the Imperial Family and all dignitaries who will directly participate in the Daijō Sai rites. The Emperor's purification is called Misogi ("Body-cleansing"). The ceremony consists in the presentation to the Emperor by priests and chamberlains of purification garments and of a purification wand called a *nusa*. The Emperor returns these to the ritualists and they are cast away on flowing water. Formerly the Emperor proceeded in person to the banks of the Kamo River near Kyōto, and, entering the stream, purified himself in running water. The purification day was observed as an occasion for giving alms to widows and widowers. At the height of the mediæval period the procession to the Kamo river was a pageant of great magnificence. The Emperor was borne in a palanquin and with him went a retinue of over one thousand five hundred persons and more than one hundred horses.

The second purification ceremony, called Ōharai ("Great Driving-out") is performed just outside of the Shōmei Gate of the Southern Court of the Shinshin Den. It is attended by members of the Imperial Family and by all others who participate directly in the Daijō Sai. While all stand, a priest reads a purification ritual (*norito*). Then a second priest takes his place in front of the people and drives out all impurity by waving before them a device called an Ō Nusa, which from ancient times has been used



Shintō Purification Devices.

in Shintō rituals as a means of magical purification. The Ō Nusa consists of a branch of Sakaki hung with cut paper and linen fiber. In accomplishing the driving out of impurity it is waved sharply to the left once, then once to the right and then back again to the left. Prior to the modern period, as part of the preparation for the Daijō Sai, Great Purification Messengers (Ōharai Shi) went throughout the length and breadth of the land and carried out the purification of the entire nation. Both of the purification ceremonies described above are performed on November 12.

On the day before the Daijō Sai the buildings and gateways to be used in this ceremony are purified and consecrated with old Shintō rites. The service is called the Daijōgū no Chin Sai—"Ceremony of Tranquilizing the Daijō Shrines." It is essentially a magico-religious worship of certain ancient deities that preside over buildings and gateways. It consists of two parts, the Den Sai, or Building Ceremony, and the Mon Sai, or the Gate Ceremony. The interiors of the Yuki and the Suki Halls are divided into two separate rooms, called in each case the "Inner Chamber" (Naijin) and the "Outer Chamber" (Gwaijin). The ceremony begins with the Inner Chamber of the Yuki Hall. In the four corners of the room Sakaki branches tied with hemp fiber are erected and then about the bases of these are scattered rice, salt and small charms called *kirinusa*, made of clipped hemp fiber. Then food offerings are presented in the Outer Chamber, a *norito* is read and the guarding deities of the building are worshipped. The same ceremony is then performed in the Suki Hall.

The rites then shift to the worship of the gods of the gateways.<sup>2</sup> To the right and the left of the four entrances to the enclosure about the Yuki and the Suki Halls—on the south, north, west and east—Sakaki tied with *nusa* are set up, and salt, rice, and *kirinusa* are scattered about. Then at the southern entrance the deities of gateways are worshipped by the presentation of food offerings and the read-

<sup>2</sup> The guardian gods of gates are, Ama-no-Iwato-Wake-no-Kami, Kushi-Iwa-Mado-no-Kami and Toyo-Iwa-Mado-no-Kami. The Kogoshūi says that the two last named are also guardian deities of buildings.

ing of a *norito*. The "Building Ceremony" is then carried out in the Kairyū Den, which is the Emperor's Ablution Hall standing north of the Yuki and the Suki Halls. It is here in the Kairyū Den that the Emperor purifies himself prior to carrying out the food ritual in each of these two shrines.

On the night prior to the beginning of the Daijō Sai is carried out the Spirit Pacification Ceremony, called the Chinkon Sai or the Mitama-Shizume-no-Matsuri. The primary purpose of this service is to tranquilize the spirit of the Emperor and to co-ordinate diverse psychological elements within him so as to equip him to pass safely through the momentous events of the following night. The ceremony also effects a prolongation of the Emperor's life. The same service is performed for the Empress. The Chinkon Sai is, as a matter of fact, an annual event of the Imperial Court, carried out just before the Niiname Sai. The place of the yearly service is a shrine called the Ryōki Den situated to the rear of the three great Palace shrines. At the time of the Enthronement Ceremonies the Chinkon Sai is performed in the Kyōto Imperial Palace.

The Chinkon Sai can be understood only in proportion as we acquaint ourselves with a primitive conception regarding multiple spirits. Such a view was held by the ancient Japanese. It was, and still is, widely prevalent among other peoples. Some peoples believe in the existence of two, some three, some four, some in as many as seven different souls or spirits which inhabit the body of the individual person. The psychology of the ancient Japanese seems to have made room for four of these independent souls—a "gentle spirit," a "rough spirit," a "luck spirit," and a "wondrous spirit."<sup>3</sup>

These spirits might any or all wander from the body and thus be separated from the original person at a time of crisis. In the Chinkon Sai, as carried out in ancient Japan, powerful means were used to restrain all these spirits within the body. The purpose was to make sure that no element of the Emperor's total psychological equipment should be

<sup>3</sup> For an excellent discussion of these early beliefs as related to Old Shintō, see Katō, Genchi, *A Study of Shintō, the Religion of the Japanese Nation*, pp. 32-47.



straying without the body at the time of the Niiname Sai or the Daijō Sai. The means originally used to accomplish this end were magical. This ancient magical ceremonial is re-enacted at the time of the Daijō Sai, but is now interpreted as essentially a prayer for tranquil spirits and long lives for their Majesties.

The preparation for the Chinkon Sai involves first the making ready of a temporary shrine by setting up two Himorogi. From the standpoint of one facing these, the Himorogi on the right hand is regarded as the dwelling place of eight ancient Kami<sup>4</sup> enshrined in the Shinden of the Tōkyō Palace, while the one on the left hand is for a god of the Old Shintō pantheon named Ōnaobi-no-Kami, who rectifies all errors and sets all wrongs aright. After these nine deities have been summoned to take up temporary residence in the Himorogi, Kagura Uta is rendered, and during this interval the so-called eight treasures are carried in and placed before the Himorogi. These eight treasures consist of a sword, a bow, two arrows, twenty bells called *suzu*, twenty bells of another kind called *taku*, a roll of coarse silk cloth, five pounds (*kin*) of a cloth of ancient make called *yufu* and ten pounds of linen. Other offerings consisting of *sake*, cakes of pounded rice (*mochi*), sea fish, river fish, sea weed and vegetables are also placed before the Himorogi.

The explanation of the use of the "eight treasures" is that when the Imperial Grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, came down from Heaven he brought with him ten auspicious treasures, which later found their way into the possession of Jimmu Tennō and were used throughout successive generations in prolonging the lives of the Emperors. These treasures make an interesting list. They were a Mirror of the Offing, a Mirror of the Shore, a Yata Mirror, a Yata Sword, a Life-inspiring Jewel, a Jewel of Perfect Health and Strength, a Jewel for Resuscitating the Dead, a Jewel for Warding Off Evil from Roads, a Serpent-preventing Scarf, a Bee-preventing Scarf, and a Scarf of Various Materials and Efficacies. They were one and all magical objects re-

<sup>4</sup>To be distinguished from the eight food gods of the Nukiho Shiki.

lated to the protection and preservation of life. If one shook these objects about and counted, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten," such mighty power would be released from them as would recall even the dead to life. In the modern Chinkon Sai "eight treasures" of a very different character are introduced in the rites as a ceremonial remembrance of these old magical devices.

After the treasures and the offerings have been placed a priest enters bearing two ceremonial boxes made of willow wood, one containing clothes belonging to the Emperor and the other a sacred cord of thick white silk, called Ontama-no-Wo,<sup>5</sup> which represents the life of the Emperor. These are placed on tables within a specially dedicated area before the Himorogi. The chief ritualist then claps his hands together thirty-two times, in four series of eight claps each. Then a female ritualist, holding bells in one hand and a vine-draped spear in the other, mounts an object resembling an inverted tub, called Ukefune, and performs a dance. She strikes the tub with the spear and with each blow counts—"One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten." With each count a priest ties a knot in the Emperor's life-cord (the Ontama-no-Wo). The cord is then returned to its box. The chief ritualist then takes the box containing the Emperor's garments and standing before the Kami shakes the box ten times, and then returns it to its table. The boxes are then carried out. Following this the garments and the Ontama-no-Wo of the Empress are brought in and the same ceremony is carried out with them.

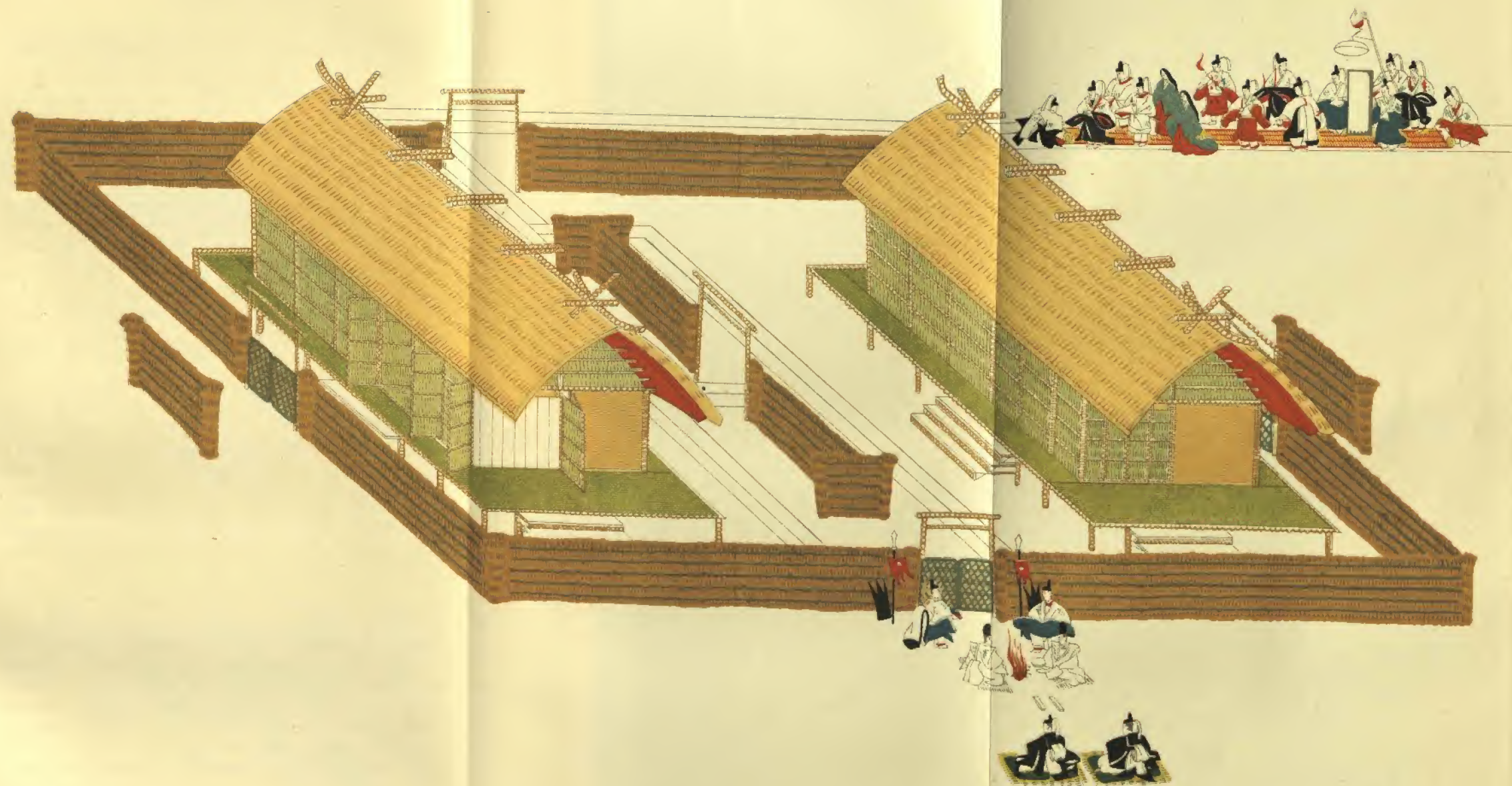
The mythological prototype of the dance on the Ukefune is to be found in that performed by Uzume-no-Mikoto before the Rock-cave of Heaven at the time of the withdrawal of the Sun Goddess. With this dance the Sun Goddess was pleased and her disturbed spirit pacified. Here again the rite is probably much older than the myth which supposedly explains its origin. The Chinkon Sai is worthy of detailed study as an excellent example of magical causation. The introduction of treasures which represent certain primitive devices for protecting and restoring life, the pro-

<sup>5</sup>Ontama-no-Wo probably means "Great Life Master."



longed clapping of the hands, the counting, the unusual dance, the shaking of the garments, the tying of a life-cord which thereby binds the Emperor's spirit so that no part can wander away, all these details are parts of an ancient ritual of magic, which, as is frequently the case with magical survivals elsewhere, are now given symbolical interpretation. In such survivals Shintō ceremonies are particularly rich. They impart a depth of historical continuity and a richness of color to the Enthronement Ceremonies that constitute no small part of the peculiar attraction that attaches to the study of these rites.

With the various ceremonies and procedures described above the main preparations for the Daijō Sai are accomplished.



The Daijō Gū. To the right is the Yuki Hall to the left the Suki Hall.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DAIJŌ SAI: THE GREAT NEW FOOD FESTIVAL

The principal rites of the Daijō Sai take place inside of the two buildings of primitive type, called the Yuki and the Suki Halls, to which attention has already been directed. The general name given these two buildings as well as the enclosure within which they stand, including certain other attached structures made use of in the ceremonies, is Daijō Gū, which means Daijō Shrine. Prior to the modern period the Daijō Gū was usually laid out in the Southern Court of the Shinshin Den. For the Enthronement Rites of Emperor Taishō in 1915 the Daijō Gū was built in the Gardens of the Sendō Palace of Kyōto.

In the architecture and furnishings of the Daijō Gū, as well as in the food ritual and other rites carried out therein, modern Japan re-lives her ancient past. The enclosure of the Daijō Gū is surrounded by a simple brush-wood fence, measuring six *shaku* in height, sixteen *ken* [one *ken* equals six *shaku*] from east to west and ten *ken* from north to south. On the day of the great ceremony the fence is decorated with boughs of Pasania tree hung with streamers of white bark-paper called *shide*. At the middle of each of the four sides of the enclosure is a gateway, called the Southern God-gate (Minami Shin Mon), the Northern God-gate (Kita Shin Mon), the Eastern God-gate (Higashi Shin Mon) and the Western God-gate (Nishi Shin Mon), respectively. Each gateway is guarded by a *torii* made of plain unbarked wood. The *torii* measures eight *shaku* in width and nine *shaku* in height, with the exception of the one on the north which is ten *shaku* high. A brushwood fence, provided with a God-gate in the middle, extends north and south between the Yuki and the Suki Halls. Surrounding the brushwood enclosure at a little distance is a larger



PLAN OF THE DAIJŌ GŪ—WHERE THE GREAT  
NEW FOOD FESTIVAL IN HELD

- 1.—Kairyū Den—The Emperor's Ablution Hall.
- 2.—Yuki Den—Where the Yuki Food Ritual is performed.
- 3.—Suki Den—Where the Suki Food Ritual is performed.
- 4.—The Yuki Cook House (Yuki Kashiwaya).
- 5.—The Suki Cook House (Suki Kashiwaya).
- 6-7.—Chō Den—Halls of Attendance for the Empress.
- 8-9.—Tables for National Offerings (Niwazumi Mono).
- 10.—Hall of Attendance for Retinue of Empress (Dengai Omi no Akusha).
- 11-12.—Halls of Attendance for Retinue of Emperor (Omi no Akusha).
- 13-14.—Exterior Halls of Attendance for Guests (Migi no Akusha and Hidari no Akusha).
- 15-18.—Halls for Musicians.
- 19.—Hall for Changing Robes (Hikaejo).
- 20.—Main Gate of Sento Palace.
- 21.—Northern God-gate.
- 22.—Southern God-gate.
- 23.—Western God-gate.
- 24.—Eastern God-gate.
- 25-34.—Guards of Honor.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, Taishō Yonen.

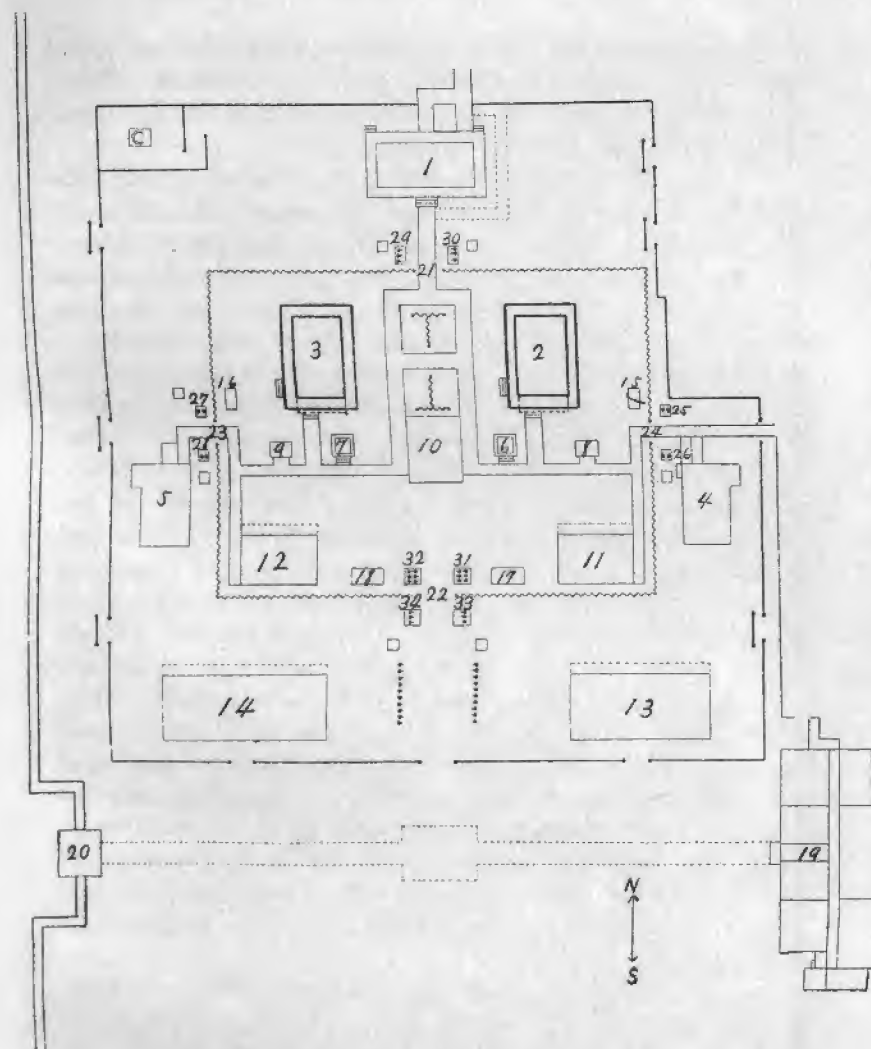


Diagram of Daijō Gū.—See facing page.

enclosure entered by gates on all sides except the north, and beyond this again are the outer walls of the Sendō Palace Grounds, approached through the Main Gateway (Sei Mon) lying to the southwest of the Daijō Gū.

Within the brushwood enclosure stand the Yuki Den and the Suki Den, the former on the eastern side, the latter on the western. They reproduce in form and size the primitive Japanese dwelling, which, as already pointed out, has survived into modern times in the architecture of the more simply constructed Shintō shrines. They stand on piles, a fact which among numerous others has attracted more than one Japanese student to comparisons with the architecture of the Malayo-Polynesian areas. The cross-beams of the roof project beyond the ridges, which are set at intervals with boles of wood, called *katsugi*. The two Halls are built in exact duplicate, each measuring three *ken*<sup>1</sup> from east to west and five *ken* from north to south. The posts and all other timbers are of rough unbarked pine. The roofs are thatched with *Miscanthus*. The walls and the ceilings are of matting. Surrounding each building is a veranda with floor of bamboo covered with rush matting. The eastern half of the southern face of each building is made into an entrance, provided with double, swinging doors and hung with a screen of bamboo, which can be rolled up so as to provide easy passage. Within this again are curtains of cloth. The Emperor enters by this southern door-way. A second entrance for the use of other participants in the ceremony is provided at the southern end of the western face of the building.

Just without the Northern God-gate stands the Emperor's Ablution Hall (the Kairyū Den), connected by covered corridors with the Yuki and the Suki Halls. To the south of each of these two halls stands a small building called the Chō Den where the Empress attends. Between the two Chō Den is a larger place-of-waiting for the retinue of the Empress. At the southeastern and the southwestern corners of the inner enclosure are buildings called Omi Aku Sha where Princes and high dignitaries in the suite of the

<sup>1</sup> The *ken* used in this case measures eight *shaku*.

Emperor attend. Outside of the Southern God-gate are two large structures, one toward the east and one toward the west where guests privileged to attend the ceremonies wait. There are also music halls, shelters for watch fires and certain other minor buildings.

The meanings of the words *Yuki* and *Suki* are unsolved problems in Japanese philology. The terms have long been obsolete in the every-day language of the people, except as proper nouns. They have been handed down from remote generations in literature and in ceremony, but no existing evidence in either of these fields is sufficiently explicit and reliable to make certain beyond all doubt what the words actually meant in early times. Opinions on this point differ widely among Japanese scholars. The Nihongi in the Chronicle of Temmu Tennō (Temmu Tennōki), explains *yuki* with two ideograms which properly mean "consecrated-purified," or perhaps better, "tabooed-purified." The same chronicle says that *suki* means "next" or "following," which would make it simply an earlier form of the term *tsugi* of modern Japanese speech, meaning also "next" or "following." Japanese scholars while commonly accepting this early explanation of *yuki*, tend to repudiate the derivation of *suki*, largely on the ground that logic seems to demand that *suki* have a meaning more congruous with that of *yuki*. To take *suki* as referring to something following *yuki*, as if the latter were first in importance and the former second, is regarded as hardly reasonable.

The great Motoori Norinaga explained *sugi* in the sense of *susugi kiyomeru*, that is as a contraction of these two words, with the meaning of "cleanse-purify." The consensus of Japanese exegetical opinion follows this derivation. Very recently, however, Mr. Kiyonuki Yatsuka, who is one of the best known contemporary Shintō scholars and himself a ritualist of the Imperial Household Department, in a discussion entitled "Concerning Yuki and Suki,"<sup>2</sup> has brought forward certain data that raise considerable doubt regarding the legitimacy of Motoori's derivation. Briefly stated, Mr. Yatsuka's view is that in accounting for *suki* we

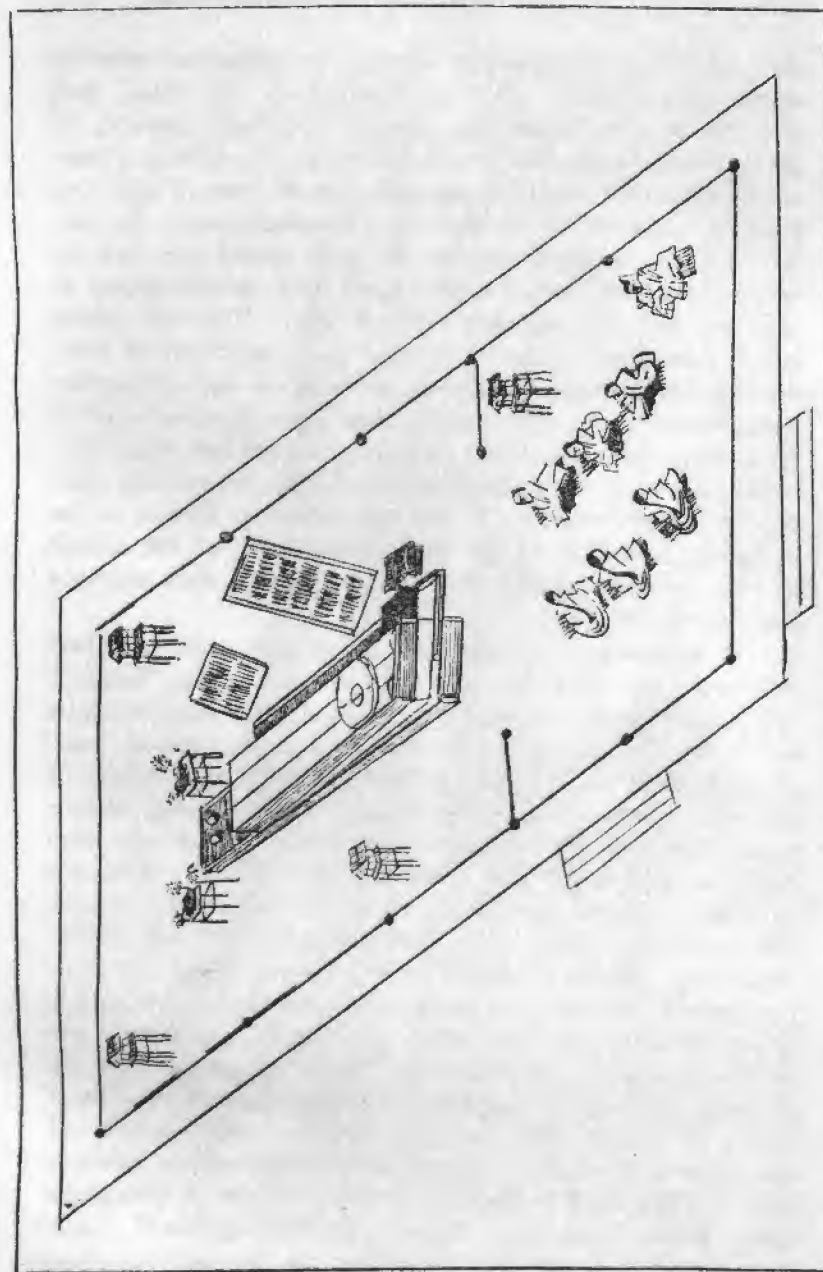
<sup>2</sup> See *Chūō Shidan* (中央史壇), June, 1928, pp. 126 ff.

may safely follow the statement of the Temmu Tennōki that it means "next" or "following." The modern form *tsugi*, "next," was pronounced *suki* in ancient times. *Suki* means the service that follows after the *Yuki*. It is a second *Yuki*. First and second here refer not to order of importance but merely to sequence of time. The author then calls attention to the significant fact that at the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise on the occasions of three of the great annual ceremonies, namely, the Tsukinami Matsuri ("Monthly Festival") of June and of December, and the Kanname Matsuri ("Divine New Food Festival") of October,<sup>3</sup> in each of these observances there is celebrated at ten o'clock at night the *Yuki no Yube no Ō Mike* ("Consecrated-purified Great Evening Food-offering") and then immediately following this at two o'clock in the morning the *Yuki no Ashita no Ō Mike* ("Consecrated-purified Great Morning Food-offering"). It will be noticed that the archaic term *Yuki* is used with reference to both of these service. They concern food-offering just as does the great service of the Daijō Sai. Furthermore, they take place at exactly the same hours as do the two food rituals of the Daijō Sai.

The conclusion is that in ancient times *Yuki* and *Suki* referred to two services connected with purified food-offerings. Both were *yuki* rituals, that is, in either case the food was consecrated and tabooed (*yuki*). The second of these must have originally been called the *Suki no Yuki*, which in modern Japanese would be read *Tsugi no Yuki*, or the second *Yuki*. In the Daijō Sai the older expression, *Suki no Yuki*, has been abbreviated to *Suki*. *Yuki Den* then simply means the Consecrated-purified (Food) Hall, while *Suki Den* means the Next (Consecrated-purified Food) Hall.

On the early morning of November fourteenth the interiors of the *Yuki* and the *Suki* Halls are made ready for the ceremonies of the coming night. The installation of the more important articles, however, does not take place until evening. Each building is prepared in exact duplicate of the other with interior furnishings that challenge attention as the most remarkable objects of all the multitude of

<sup>3</sup> To be distinguished from the November Niiname Matsuri.

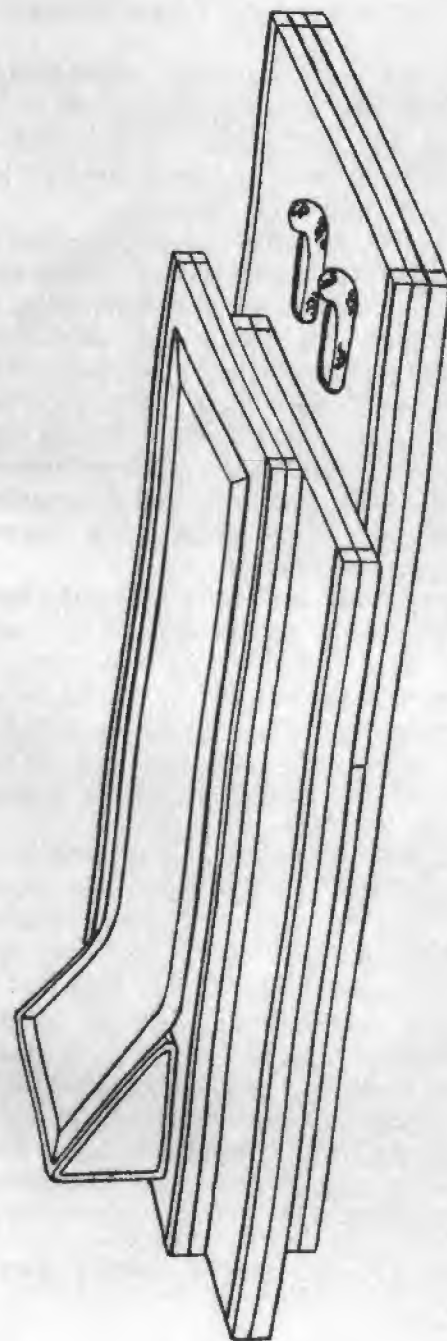


Sketch of the Interior of the Yuki Den. From an old print in the library of Kyōto Fu.  
The Comb and Fan here appear on a small table to the east of the Shinza.



rare forms and devices that appear in connection with the enthronement rites. The furnishings of the ritual halls and the various ceremonial utensils that now appear, reproduce in a large measure the materials of ordinary Japanese life, not of a few centuries past, but of remoter ages that must be reckoned by at least two thousand years. So consecrated are these objects by time, so sacred are they by associations with Emperors and Kami, that an atmosphere of mystery and awe surrounds them still. The old taboos which from earliest days have rigorously set them off from all that is common and unclean have never been altogether lifted from them. Prior to modern times Japanese scholars have been imprisoned for venturing to publish what they knew regarding the interior of the Daijō Gū and the rites that transpired there. At present, however, thanks to the enlightened policy of the authorities, most of the details of both furnishings and ritual can be studied with openness and exactitude.

The doorway between the inner and outer chambers of each ritual hall is hung with a reed screen bordered with white paper; around the walls of the inner sanctum are hung curtains of white cloth. In the evening court ritualist place the *Shinza*, or "God-seat" in the middle of the inner room. It is a great couch made of large rectangular slabs of pressed straw (*tatami*). It is set with head to the south and foot to the north. For the foundation of the couch six *tatami* are placed end to end, thus providing a base three feet (*shaku*) wide and twelve feet long. Above this are laid two *tatami* three feet wide and nine feet long, so placed as to overlap the foundation *tatami* by a foot or more, thus providing a broad shelf extending along the entire eastern side of the couch. On top of these are laid, in position corresponding with the lowest tier, two *tatami* nine feet in length. The height of the couch is brought to approximately that of an ordinary bed. At the head is placed a peculiar pillow of triangular shape, known as the *saka makura*, the "hill-pillow." Over the uppermost *tatami* and the pillow are spread, one above the other eight successive layers of reed matting—the so-



The Shinza, or God-seat, of the Daijō Sai. The Throne of the Emperor of Old Japan was a Couch.

By courtesy of Dr. Masanao Sekine.

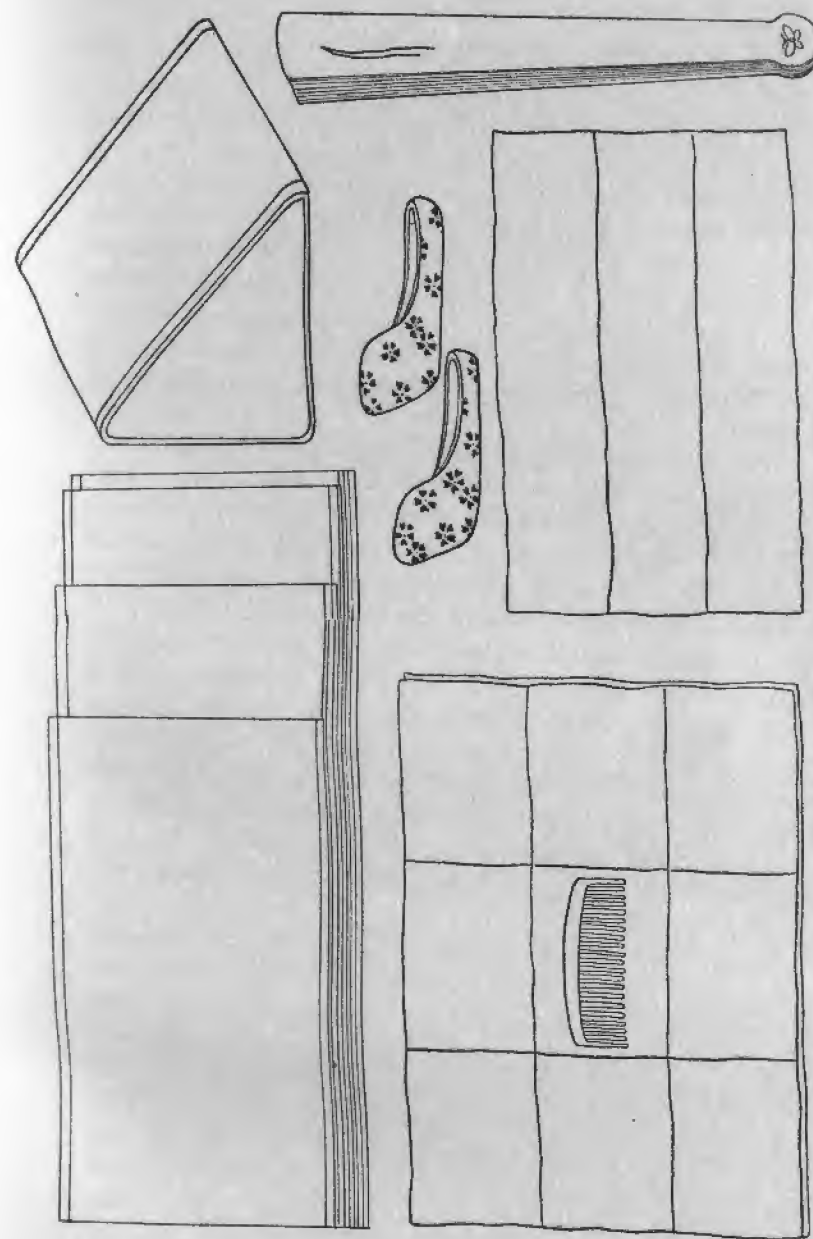
called *haya-tatami*, "eight-fold matting." Completely covering the eight-fold matting is spread a cloth of pure white raw silk, known as the *On-fusuma*. At the head of the couch above the pillow is folded a simple unlined garment of white silk. This is called the *On-hitoe*.

On the shelf to the east of the pillow, rests a ceremonial box of willow (*yanagi bako*) containing a folded cloth of soft white silk. It is called the *uchi-barai-nuno*, or the "strike-drive-off-cloth." The length has varied from age to age, being variously given in ancient documents in figures that range from six to thirteen *shaku*. The original usage of the cloth has long since been forgotten. It may represent a primitive garment; the name with which it is designated suggests that it may have once been used for warding off insects, or for cleaning the hands and face; or it may possibly have once had magical associations.

On the same projecting shelf are also placed a fan made of white wood and an unornamented comb also made of plain white wood. Each is folded in a white paper covering. The teeth of the comb face the couch. At the foot of the bed, on the projecting end of the lowest tier of *tatami* rests an uncovered willow box containing a pair of slippers. The ground color of the slippers is purple, ornamented with a flower design in white.

None of the articles described above is utilized directly in the food ritual itself. The God-seat and its strange furnishings stand there throughout the night as silent witnesses of a half-forgotten past. The couch can represent only one thing; it is the throne of the Sumeragi of the legendary and early post-legendary periods of Japanese history. Royal couch-thrones of similar construction have been reported from Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> But for whom is the throne prepared? The living Emperor does not mount it, no historical documents explain just why it is there. The presence of the comb has suggested to some interpreters the thought that a female personage is expected—perhaps the

<sup>4</sup> See Horioka, *Daijō Shiki to Nampō Dōzoku Shiken* (大嘗會式と南方土俗私見), "A Private View of the Daijō Ceremonies and the Customs of the South Pacific", p. 2.



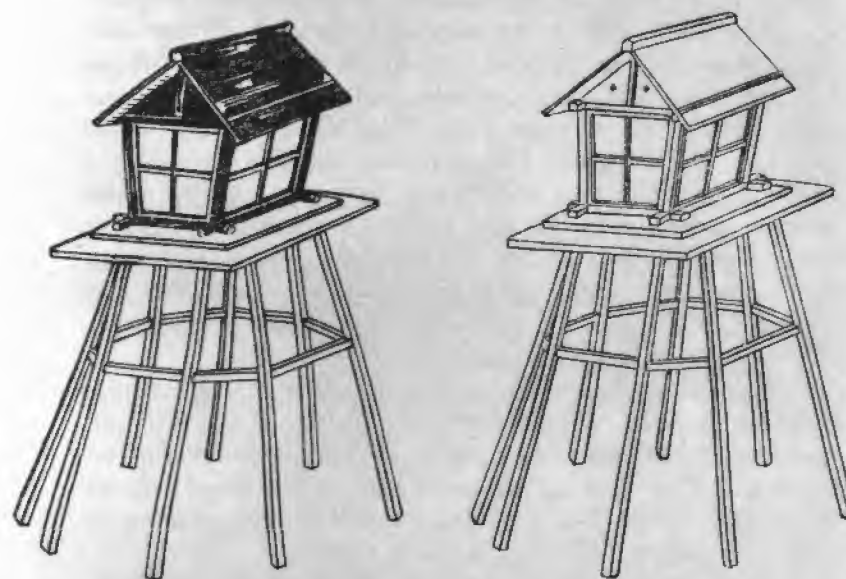
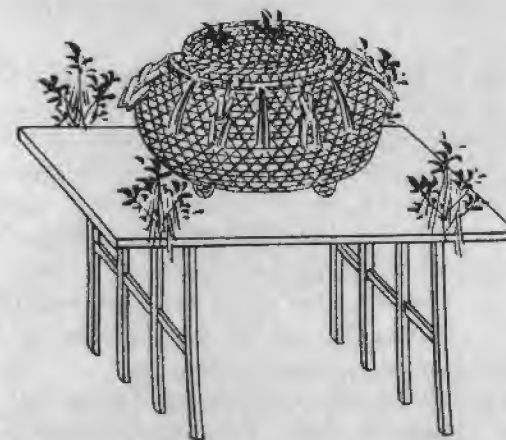
Sacred Objects placed on the Shinza. Above—the Eight-fold Tatami and the "Hill-pillow."  
Below—Comb with wrapper, Slippers, and Fan with wrapper.

From the Kojirien.

great Amaterasu-Ōmikami herself. But other provision is made for the worship of Amaterasu-Ōmikami in the ritual; no historical records say explicitly that the throne is hers, and, finally, combs were worn in early Japan by men and women alike. Perhaps the throne of the Yuki Den is for one who has just gone on that last long journey from which there is no return,—except in spirit. It is possible that all the objects under consideration here, couch-throne included, are primitive regalia emblems. The five emblems of royalty of the early rulers of Benares are said to have been a fan, a slipper, a parasol, a diadem and a sword.<sup>5</sup>

To the east of the Shinzā is placed at the time of the food ritual, a rush mat bordered with white cloth. This mat is called the *Kami no Sugomo* or the *Kami no Kegomo*, the "Food-mat of the Kami," and as the name indicates, is place where the food offerings of the great ritual are arranged by the hand of the Emperor. Just to the north of this is spread a second mat called the *On Sugomo* or the *Mi Sugomo*—the "Emperor's Food-mat." The size of these mats has varied with different historical period. Present sources describe them as of the same size, namely, three *shaku* square. Both mats are placed at an angle toward the south-east, which brings them into a direct line with the Grand Imperial Shrine of Ise. In carrying out the food ritual the Emperor faces toward the Dwelling of Amaterasu-Ōmikami.

On either side of the foot of the *Shinza* is placed a four-legged table, and on each table a basket tied with Sakaki branches. These baskets are for the garments of the Kami. In the basket to the west is placed a cloth designated by the ancient name of *Nigitahe* ("Soft-offering"), and in that to the east, a cloth called *Aratahe* ("Coarse-offering"). The exact nature of the cloth used in the modern ceremony is not made known. Anciently, the *Nigitahe* was probably a piece of white raw silk, or, earlier still, a piece of bark-cloth; the *Aratahe* was probably a coarse cloth of



Furnishings of Yuki (and Suki) Den. Above—Basket for Nigitahe, on table with eight legs. Below—White and Black Lights

<sup>5</sup> See H.E.R.E., Vol. 10, p. 634.

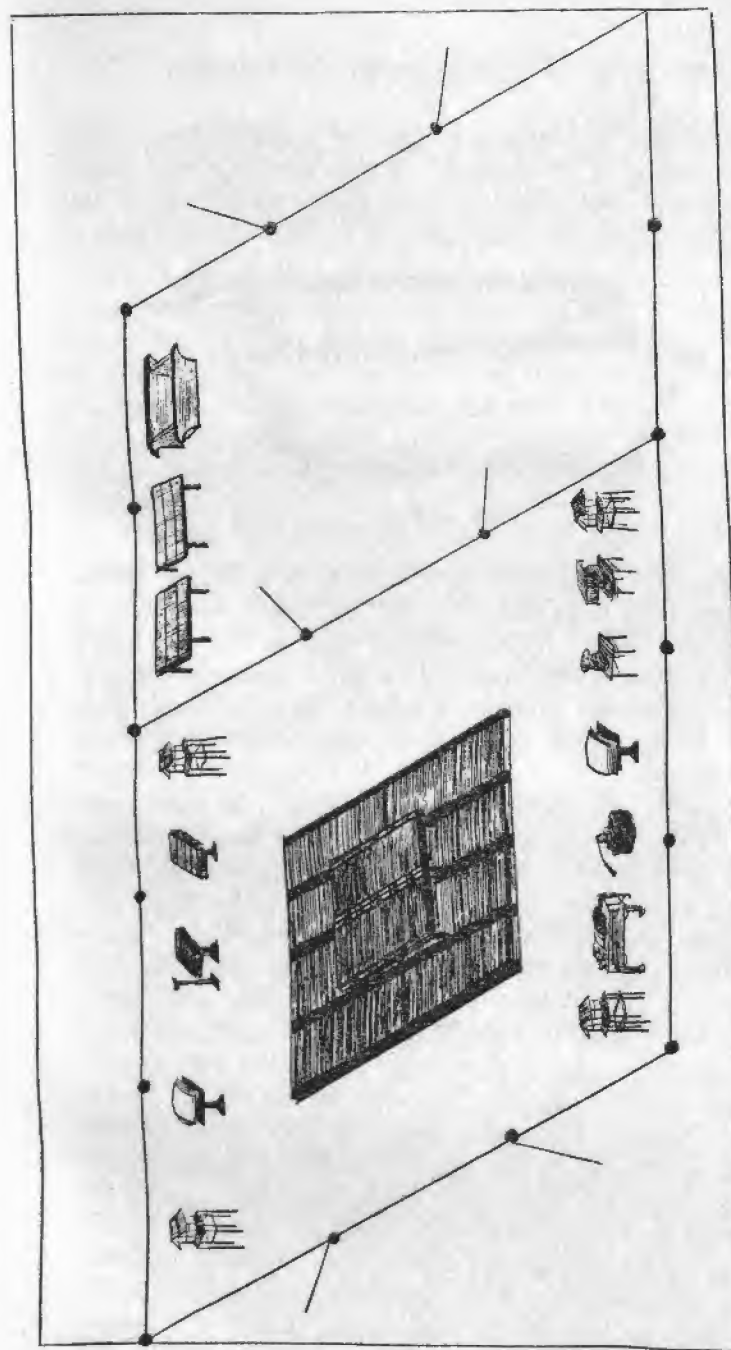


bleached hemp or cotton. Elsewhere in the Inner Chamber are placed stands for lamps. These are of two kinds, known as White Light (*Shiroki Tōrō*) and Black Light (*Kuroki Tōrō*). The explanation is that the former is made of white wood, the latter of black. These lamps are lighted on the evening of the Daijō Sai from a flame kindled by rubbing together two pieces of wood (*hinoki*). The Outer Chamber is used as a place of attendance for Princes, High Officiating Ritualists and the two Uneme, or Female Ritualists, who directly assist the Emperor.

The Emperor leaves the Imperial Palace late in the afternoon and passes in state procession between lines of troops to a temporary palace called the Tongū, where he is joined by the Empress and members of the Imperial Family. At about six o'clock in the evening Guards of Honor take their places at the gates of the Daijō Gū. Just without the Northern and the Southern God-gates are set up on either side of the entrance, one "God-shield" (*Kami-tate*) and two "God-spears" (*Kami-boko*), thereby providing a symbolic guard of two shields and four spears on the north and the same number on the south. At about six o'clock in the evening Guards of Honor, dressed in ceremonial robes that reproduce in elaborate detail of form and color the costumes of old Japan, take their places at the four gateways of the inner enclosure.

Following this, invited guests consisting of high naval, military and civil officials with their ladies, arrive and are conducted to the two outer places of attendance situated to the east and the west of the outer gate of the Daijō Gū, on the south. From these buildings nothing of the ceremonies conducted within the ritual halls is visible.

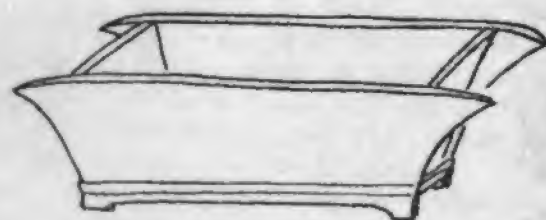
Thereupon the God-seats are placed within the Yuki and the Suki Halls by the Chief Ritualist and the Assistant Chief Ritualist. The lights are then lighted within both the Yuki Den and the Suki Den, and the watch fires at the four gates are kindled. Following this the Emperor arrives at the Kairyū Den and there carries out the ceremony of ablution. Anciently the Emperor purified himself by a prior bath in hot water at the Palace and then on arrival



An old diagram of the interior of the Kairyū Den. The central *tatami*, lights, seats, the *Onyu no Fune* and stands for clothing and various other articles used in the rites are shown.

From an old print in library of Kyōto Fu.

at the Kairyū Den conducted a second purification. The former was called the Greater Purification Hot-bath (*Ōmi no Oyu*), the latter, the Lesser Purification Hot-bath (*Omi no Oyu*). In the present, only the latter purification is



Onyu no Fune.

observed. The receptacle for the bath is a square shape tub of primitive construction called the *Onyu no Fune*, or the Hot-bath Boat. Other objects used in the ceremony are a re-creation of the utensils of early Japanese history. When he enters the bath the Emperor wears a simple garment of hemp called the *Ama no Hagoromo* (Heavenly Feather Robe).

After the purification bath the Emperor dons ceremonial robes of pure white silk, and final hand-cleansing rites are administered. His Majesty then receives his royal baton. He has now been prepared by all the high and ancient rites of Shintō to enter as High Priest of the Nation into communion with the great Kami of the Food Ritual. The Empress then arrives at the Kairyū Den, dons ceremonial robes, purifies her hands by having consecrated water poured over them and is handed her ceremonial fan (*hisen*).

Then court musicians stationed at the Cook House near the Eastern God-gate strike up the Song of the Pounding of the Rice (*Inatsuki Uta*). Hearing this, ritualists awaiting within the Cook House begin the cooking of the offerings to be presented by the Emperor upon the Food-mat of the Kami within the Yuki Den. Prior to modern times the unhulled first-fruits from the Sacred Rice-fields were brought directly to the cook house, placed in mortars and pounded with pestles by maidens. Then fire was made

by the rubbing together sticks of *hinoki* and with the "pure fire" thus produced the rice was cooked. This was then offered as a divine oblation in the food ritual, and partaken of by the Emperor. While the rice was being pounded the "Song of the Pounding of the Rice" was sung. In modern times, the rice is hulled and polished at the places of gathering, and accordingly there is no *inatsuki* or rice pounding at the Daijō Gū. Yet the old observance is re-enacted in pantomime. "Rice-pounding Shelters" are built, mortars are placed and maidens imitate the motions of the old ceremony. Meanwhile musicians sing the song of the rice-pounding.

During this movement of the ceremony ritualists place tables holding national food offerings within small shelters provided for the purpose in the area to the south of the Yuki Den, between this building and the eastern Cook House. This particular procedure was first adopted in the Daijō Sai of Meiji Tennō in order to provide for the presentation of produce, including manufactured articles, poultry, fish, fruit, vegetables, etc., from all parts of the land. In the Daijō Sai of Taishō Tennō these tables were used for the presentation of one *shō* of polished rice and five *gō*<sup>a</sup> of millet from each prefecture and outlying possession, including Korea, Formosa and Saghalien.

The Chief Ritualist then enters the Outer Chamber of the Yuki Den and reads a *norito*. He then proceeds to the southern approach of the Yuki Den and awaits the arrival of the Emperor. Accompanying the Chief Ritualist are two torch-bearers.

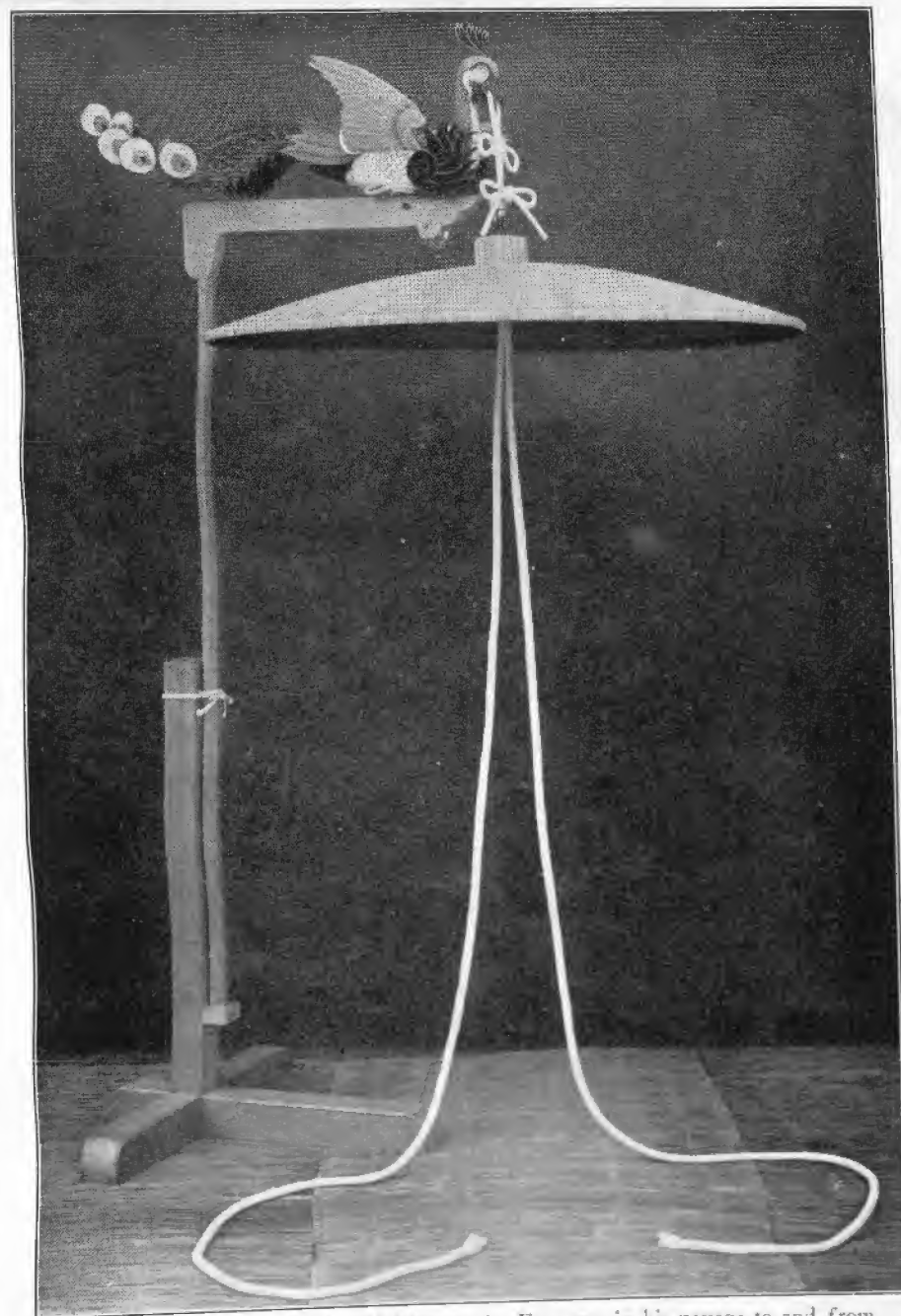
Then ensues the procession of the Emperor from the Kairyū Den to the Yuki Den. The royal progress is in the manner of the going-forth of the Divine Ruler of old Japan. First in line come the Minister of the Imperial Household Department and the Grand Master of Ceremonies, walking one on either side of the corridor. They are followed by ritualists bearing torches, one on either side. Just before the Emperor come two other ritualists, one bearing the Sacred Sword, the other the Sacred Jewels.

<sup>a</sup> A *gō* is one tenth of a *shō*.

The central path of the corridor is reserved for the progress of the Emperor alone. All others of whatever rank, must traverse narrow lanes of matting laid on either side. The Emperor walks "between Heaven and Earth." The ground below must not be exposed to his sacred feet lest it become taboo, and lest his sacred virtue be drained off there; the air above must not be exposed to his head. In front of the Emperor is unrolled a mat of rushes; after he has passed the mat is rolled up behind him. On this mat the Emperor alone walks. At times in the past the *Kwampaku*, who was the highest official in the land, was permitted to follow on the sacred mat, holding the Emperor's train. At the times the high dignitaries who precede the Emperor have been permitted to traverse the central aisle.

The Emperor walks bare-footed. Over his head is held a great umbrella called the *Kwangai*, or, in original Japanese, the *On Suge Kasa* ("Sedge Umbrella"). The name is derived from the fact that the sun-shade proper is made of sedge grass. The umbrella is carried on a pole of white wood, on the upper part of which is perched a phoenix with wings outspread as if in flight. The bird is brilliantly colored in the green, yellow, red, white and purple of the clouds of good omen. The phoenix hardly belongs in the setting. It is a Chinese importation. If the original *On Suge Kasa* ever had a bird at the top, it must have been the old Yamato sun-crow. Hanging from the mouth of the phoenix is a white cord, and suspended from this is the great sedge sun-shade. Passing downward from within the upper part of the umbrella are two cords of white silk, which are held by two ritualists who walk one on either side of the Emperor.

One cannot forego recalling at this point that the umbrella is, throughout Africa and Asia, and particularly in southeast Asia, one of the most important of the insignia of royalty, and one is even tempted to wonder if it came into Japan with ancient Yamato invaders from Indonesia. One is tempted further to recall the manifold instances in cultural areas other than Japan of ceremonial precautions either very similar to, or identical with, that outlined above



The Sedge Umbrella. Held over the Emperor in his passage to and from the Ablution Hall at the time of the Daijō Sai. The Umbrella is frequently met with elsewhere, especially in southeast Asia, as the insignia of royalty.

From *Tairei Shashinchō*, *Taishō Yonen*.



wherein divine persons are restrained from setting their feet to the ground lest the soil on which thy step become sacred and thus tabooed to ordinary use, or again, lest the sacred person become contaminated. It is from this same point of view that we must explain the origin of the Japanese Sedge Umbrella, since overhead protection is just as essential as that under foot, lest the divine energy be drained off above. But we must return to the procession, itself.

Behind the Emperor goes the Grand Chamberlain holding the long train of the Royal robes. Following him come Princes, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries. The procession moves slowly southward from the Kairyū Den, then turns to the east, and then again to the north and comes to a stop at the southern stairs of the Yuki Den where the Chief Ritualist and attendants are waiting with torches. The bearers of the Regalia Sword and the Jewels then carry their treasures into the Outer Chamber and deposit them on tables made ready for the purpose. The Emperor then enters the Outer Chamber of the Yuki Den. The members of the retinue pass on to their places of attendance in the Omi no Aku Sha at the southeast corner of the inner enclosure.

After the Emperor has entered the Outer Chamber the Empress, accompanied by Princesses and Court Ladies, passes from the Kairyū Den along the same way as that taken by the former procession, to the Chō Den adjacent to the corridor in front of the Yuki Den. The members of the retinue of the Empress pass to their place of attendance in the waiting hall just to the west of the Chō Den.

After the Emperor has entered the Yuki Den and the Empress has taken her place within the Chō Den, an official of the Enthronement Commission of higher rank (*Taireishi Kōtōkan*) conducts the musicians to a fixed place in the Southern Court before the Yuki Den, while the Governor of the Yuki District similarly leads another group to a position slightly to the east of the former. The first group then renders the Kuzu Song—ancient music which has its traditional origin in the age of Jimmu Tennō. The

second group of musicians then sing the folk-songs of the Yuki District. Prior to the modern period people from the Suki and the Yuki Districts came up to Kyōto and rendered their own folk-songs at the Daijō Sai. Now the service is performed by Court musicians.

The music ended and the musicians withdrawn, the Empress and the members of her retinue worship toward the Yuki Den and then retire to the Kairyū Den. Prior to the Enthronement Ceremonies of Taishō Tennō provision was not made for attendance by the Empress. After the withdrawal of the Empress, the Princes of the Blood pass from their place of waiting in the Omi no Aku Sha to the veranda of the Yuki Den.

Then follows the most picturesque movement of the entire Daijō Sai, namely the Procession of Sacred Food Offerings (*Shinsen Gyōretsu*). From the Cook House on the east there passes to the southern stairs of the Yuki Den a colorful line of ritualists and Uneme<sup>6</sup> bearing the utensils and the offerings to be used in the food ritual. The order of the procession is as follows:

(1).—A ritualist (*Shōtenho*) accompanied by two torch bearers.

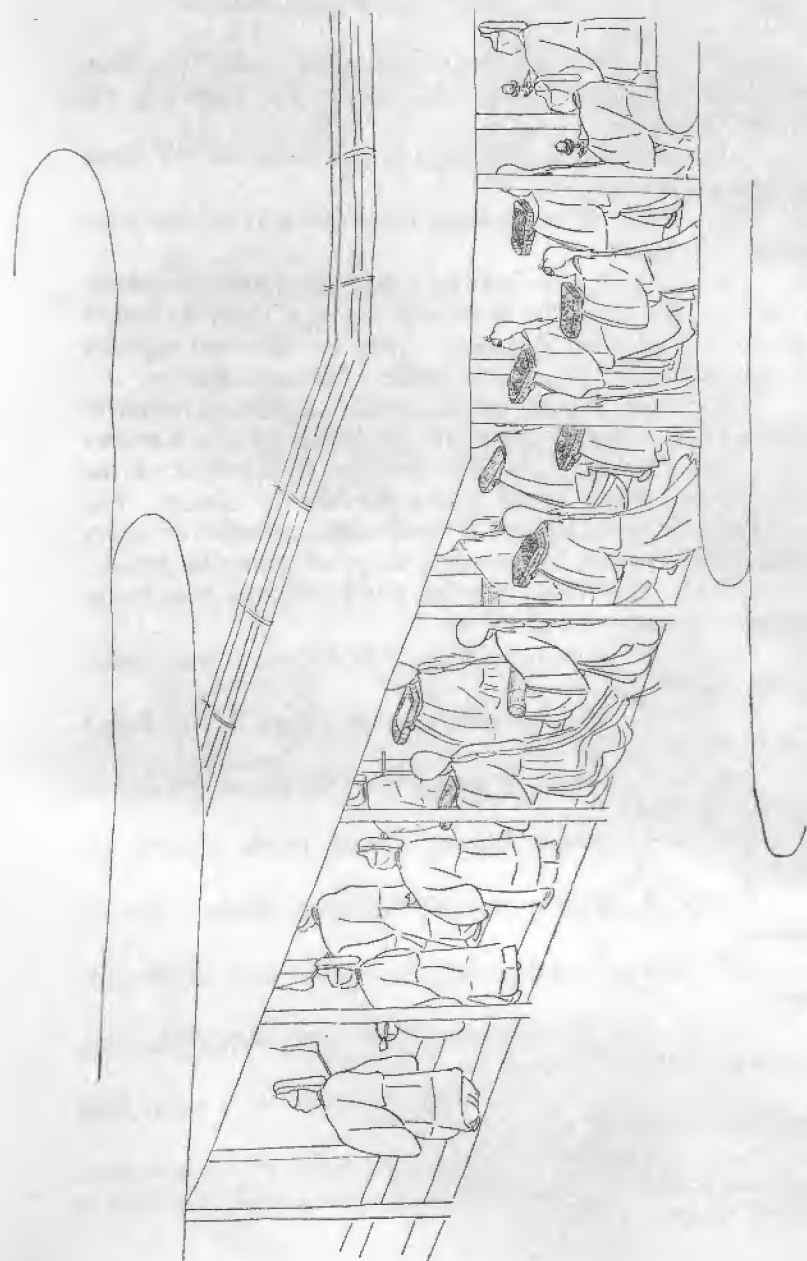
(2).—A ritualist bearing a ceremonial wand called *Kenzuriki* ("Shaved Wood"). This is a stick of *hinoki* about three feet long, used in ancient times to cast out impurity and evil.

(3).—A ritualist bearing an elongated basin (called *Ebi no Hatabune*) used in cleansing the hands of the Emperor. Formerly this basin was of earthenware, now it is of wood.

(4).—A ritualist bearing the *Tashiraka*—an earthenware pitcher of primitive design containing water for cleansing the hands of the Emperor.

(5).—The chief female attendant of the Emperor in the ritual, bearing a wooden box containing an ancient form of tooth brush. This maiden is called the Haizen, a name formerly given to one who waited on the Emperor at table.

<sup>6</sup> The name given in ancient times to female attendants of the Emperor.



The Procession of Sacred Food Offerings.

From an old print.

(6).—The assistant female attendant (called the *Shin-dori*), bearing a box containing towels for cleansing the Emperor's hands.

(7).—An Uneme bearing the Food-mat of the Kami (*Kami no Sugomo*).

(8).—An Uneme bearing the Food-mat of the Emperor (*On Sugomo*).

(9).—An Uneme bearing a box containing chopsticks (*On Hashibako*). The chopsticks are of a form no longer seen in ordinary use in Japan. They are attached together at one end in the manner of ancient Japanese scissors.

(10).—An Uneme bearing a box containing primitive dishes (called *hirate*) made of the leaves of the Kashiwa tree. The Kashiwa (*Quercus dentata*) is a species of the oak, and has tough broad leaves suitable for dishes. The appearance in the Daijō Sai of these archaic utensils of leaves undoubtedly reflects the common usage of primitive Japan.

(11).—An Uneme bearing a box (*Gohan Bako*) containing steamed rice and millet.

(12).—An Uneme bearing a box (*Nama Mono Bako*) containing fresh fish.

(13).—An Uneme bearing a box (*Kara Mono Bako*) containing dried fish.

(14).—An Uneme bearing a box (*On Ko no Mi Bako*) containing fruit.

(15).—A ritualist bearing Awabi broth (*Awabi no Shiru*).

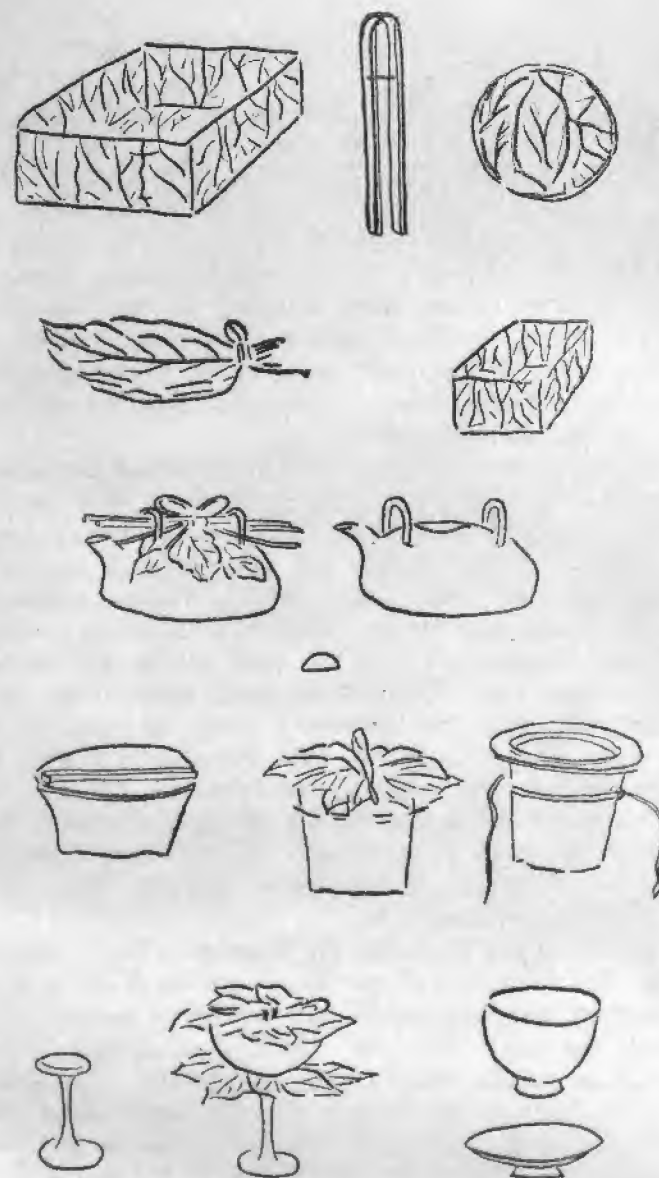
(16).—A ritualist bearing sea-weed broth (*Me no Shiru*).

(17).—Two ritualists bearing earthenware bowls (*kū-san*).

(18).—Two ritualists bearing a table with eight legs, holding broths (*atsu mono*).

(19).—Two ritualists bearing a table with eight legs, holding the sacred *sake*.

(20).—Two ritualists bearing a table with eight legs, holding boiled rice and millet. In the ritual this food is called *Okayu*.



Utensils used in the Emperor's Food Ritual of the Daijō Sai. Above—Chop-sticks with Boxes and Dishes of Kashiwa Leaves. Below—Utensils for Liquid Offerings of various kinds.

From *Chūō Shidan*, June, 1928.

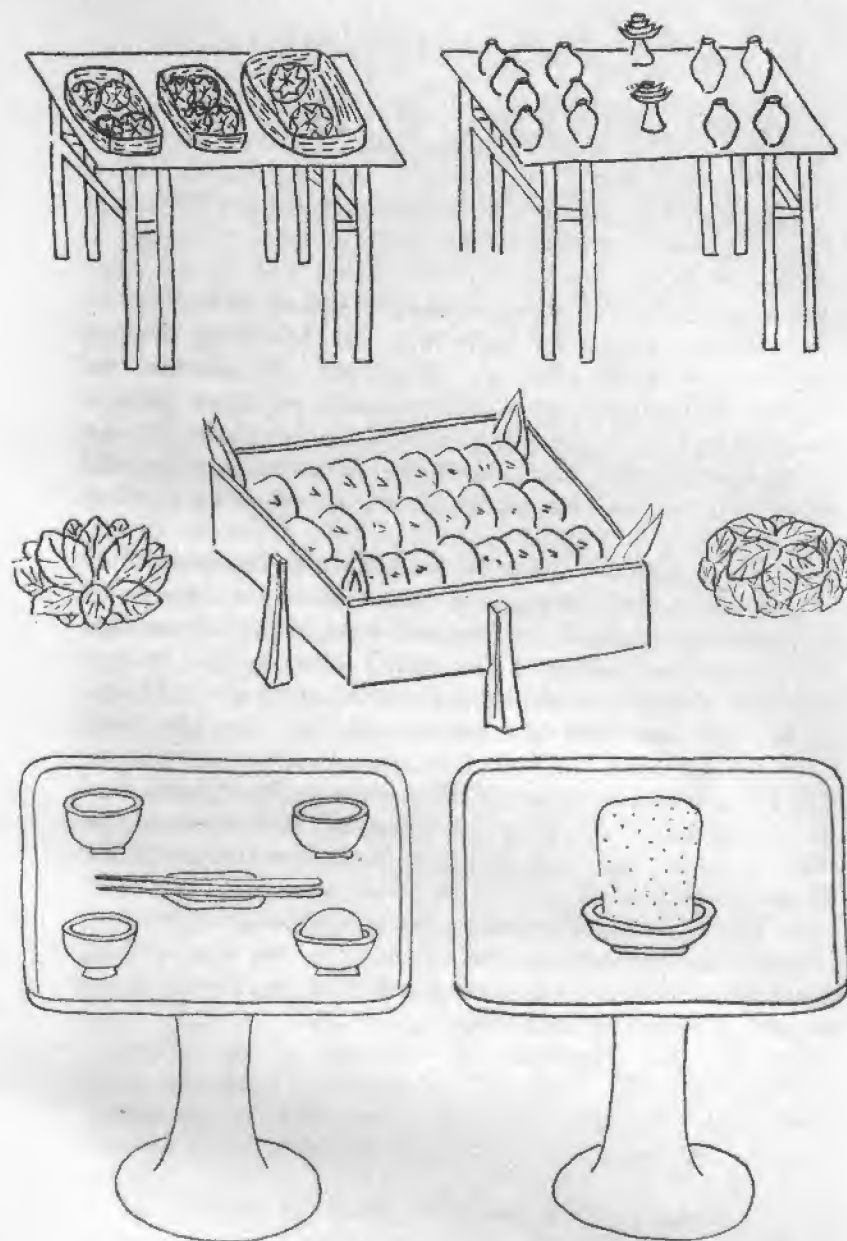


(21).—Two ritualists bearing a table with eight legs, holding the Emperor's food (*O Naorai*).

When the head of the procession has reached the Yuki Den the ritualist bearing the Kezuriki stands below the southern steps and gives a cry of warning. Then while the musicians play Kagura Uta, the Emperor passes from the Outer Chamber to the Inner Chamber of the Yuki Den. The Princes of the Blood then pass from the veranda of the Yuki Den to appointed places in the Outer Chamber. The Grand Chamberlain and the Chief Ritualist also take places in the Outer Chamber.

The Emperor's ritual of food oblation and sacramental communion with the Kami is then performed. On entering the Inner Chamber the Emperor passes to the west and then to the north of the Shinza, and seats himself on a mat to the east of the Couch-throne, facing southeast. The Haizen, assisted by the Shindori, then brings in from the Outer Chamber the utensils used in the preliminary hand-cleansing rite. The Haizen pours three times from the Tashiraka onto the Emperor's hands and catches the water in the Ebi no Hatabune. The Emperor then dries his hands on a towel presented by the Haizen. He does not rinse his mouth and makes no use of the tooth brush that appears in the food processional. All the hand-cleansing utensils are withdrawn to the Outer Chamber before the food offerings are brought in.

After cleansing his hands the Emperor offers a prayer, and then the Food-mat of the Kami and the Food-mat of the Emperor are brought in and spread in place. Immediately thereafter the food offerings are carried in one box at a time by the Shindori and the Haizen. The Shindori hands them to the Haizen and the latter opens and arranges the boxes. The order of presentation is: the box containing the chopsticks, the box of steamed rice and millet, the box of fresh fish, the box of dried fish, the box of fruit, the sea weed broth and finally the Awabi broth. It is worthy of note that no offering of vegetables is presented. All the boxes are closed with covers (*kubote*) made of Kashiwa leaves. The Haizen removes the covers and arranges the



Offerings and Utensils of Daijō Sai. Above—Table bearing Baskets filled with Leaf Dishes; Sacred Sake. Middle—Leaf Dishes and Fish Offerings. Below—Vessels for Liquid Offerings; Stand containing Sacred Rice.  
From *Kojiruien*.

boxes near the Emperor's mat. The food offerings are then placed on the Kashiwa leaf dishes (*hirade*) and laid on the Food-mat of the Kami. The broths are offered in simple vessels of unglazed red earthenware. Following this the *Miki*, or sacred white and black *sake*, is brought in by the Shindori, handed to the Haizen, and by the latter presented to the Emperor. Two portions of white *sake* are then offered up on the Kami-mat, and following this two portions of black *sake* are presented. Boiled rice and boiled millet (the so-called *Okayu*) are then brought in and presented before the Kami. After all these offerings of food and drink have been made the Emperor claps his hands three times and presents a prayer (*Gokoku Bun*) to the Kami.

The Emperor's communion meal is then brought in. In this the Emperor, holding the chopsticks in his right hand, partakes three times of the steamed rice and then three times of the steamed millet. The sacred *sake* is then brought in. The Emperor receives this from the hand of the Haizen and drinks four times of the white *sake* and then four times of the black *sake*. All utensils and offerings are then removed in the same order as when presented. After a final hand-cleansing ceremony, the Emperor withdraws to the Kairyū Den. The Recessional is in the same order as the Processional.

The Yuki ritual is ended sometime shortly before midnight. Commencing at two o'clock in the morning on November fifteenth, the same ritual from beginning to end is carried out in the Suki Den.

## CHAPTER IX

### EPILOGUE: THE MEANING OF THE CEREMONIES

We have just studied the main outlines of the two most important observances of the Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies, the Sokui Rei and the Daijō Sai. They are the two major movements of a great Imperial symphony. In multiplicity of detail and in elaborateness of preparation and consummation the Japanese Enthronement Rites are perhaps the most complicated in history. An account of the details of robes, dances, songs, banquets, processions, etc.,—fascinating events of brilliant color and action that invite investigation—is beyond the purpose of the present discussion, which is to present an outline of the great ceremonies and an interpretation thereof. How then shall we understand these involved and manifold rites? Is there any point of view from which we can find a unified perspective in the midst of all this detail?

In attempting to answer these questions we should bear in mind the fact that we are dealing with rites and forms that have come down, many of them, out of an ancient past, and which have been modified, in exterior at least, and added to on the way by various historical contributions. An interpretation of the Japanese Enthronement that assumes any approximation to completeness must take the ceremonies as they stand in their complexity and find room for the interplay of a number of elements, all of which have important meanings in the rites. In attempting to make clear to ourselves the significance of the ceremonies we should note, then, the following interpretative points of view.

In the first place the ceremonies are an impressive announcement and recognition of the fact of a new accession to the Throne. The announcement is made in two directions, first toward the great spirit world of ancestral and national Kami, and second toward the human world of Japanese sub-

jects and other peoples of the earth. Announcements to the Kami appear repeatedly in the course of the different ceremonies, but in particular the rites before the altars of the Shunkyō Den, attended by high representatives of the Japanese people and of the nations of the world, have inner meaning as a great ritual of announcement to the spirit world. The ceremonies of the Shinshin Den, as has been already pointed out, are essentially an announcement to the nation and the world of the fact of the new succession. Also, in the Shishin Den ceremony this royal announcement is recognized and replied to by the nation acting through its chief representative in the person of the Prime Minister, and all the people of the nation voice thereby their response of joy and congratulation, and their pledge of loyalty.

In the second place the Enthronement Ceremonies find meaning as a series of magnificent historical pageants wherein Japan relives her long and glorious past. Simple royal cottage, primitive couch-throne, archaic utensils of leaves, of wood, or of unglazed clay, ancient rites of magic, garments, dances and music of the early ages, mediaeval vestments, banners and buildings—all belong in the vivid historical pictures that are unfolded. This historical aspect of the Enthronement Ceremonies is one of its most important phases, one that both challenges and merits careful investigation by students of history and anthropology. Herein the Japanese people manifest a tenacity of historical continuity coupled with an assimilative power that constitutes one of their greatest sources of strength.

In the next place the ceremonies are a dramatic expression of the union of the nation—Emperor and people—in all the affairs of the governmental and social life. The Emperor and the people meet in the fellowship of rites and banquets, and herein is expressed the mutuality of their interests and their interdependence in one great social and political body.

In the fourth place the ceremonies find meaning as a great expression of thanksgiving to the ancestral spirits and the other great Kami of the nation for the preservation of the state, the granting of a beneficent ruler, and for food.

This element is especially prominent in the Daijō Sai. It is from this point of view that Japanese writers are prone to interpret the September harvest rites at the Yuki and the Suki fields and the food ritual of the Daijō Sai. Especially in the latter rites the Emperor as the great representative of the people before the Kami, by the act of presenting food and by partaking thereof himself, enters into an intimacy of communion with spiritual powers that makes possible an unusual expression of this nation-wide sentiment of thanksgiving. The fact that the food offering is placed on a mat that is turned in the direction of Ise may be legitimately interpreted as a special expression of thanksgiving to Amaterasu-Ōmikami. From this standpoint the Enthronement Ceremonies are an emphatic declaration of the nation's feeling of dependence on the Kami.

A related element of importance in this which we may call the religious aspect of the Daijō Sai, is to be found in the manner in which this festival has preserved from most ancient times right up to the present a primitive technique for the production and the preservation of food. The Daijō Sai and its preparatory rites are deeply stamped with an interest in safeguarding the growth and fertility of crops. The explanation of the elaborate precautions taken in connection with planting, cultivating and harvesting is in the desire to produce a crop that is absolutely free from all ceremonial defilement. This is not to protect the eaters of the food against contamination, but rather to protect the food itself. The original means used to accomplish this end were largely magical. Magical elements still exist, although the primitive technique has been displaced to a considerable extent by modern scientific procedure. The ancient and the modern worlds are one in this, however, that the main interest was, and still is, in food and not in gods. An important difference between the modern and the ancient situations lies in ideas regarding just what it is that preserves the good qualities of the food and carries those qualities over from harvest time to the new plants of the next spring. Modern science by its study of the foundations of life is giving its answer to this great problem. Primitive man found



his answer in the existence of a great Spirit of the Grain. If this great Spirit could be handed on pure and undefiled from autumn to spring, from harvest to planting, from mother plant to seedling then the continuity of good food would be ensured. This accounts for the elaborate purification ceremonies and the detailed precautions taken to keep out defilement, met with in connection with primitive planting and harvest rites. It accounts for the care given first fruits, for these are regarded as pre-eminently the dwelling place of the Food Spirit in its purity. Hence first fruits are usually either offered to the gods or they are employed as seeds for the new planting. In the Japanese food ritual of the Daijō Sai the first fruits are both presented before the gods and eaten by the Emperor. This latter fact is of the utmost significance. The first fruits containing the divine Rice Spirit are eaten by the Emperor. The Emperor has been carefully cleansed for the eating by elaborated rites. A purified food is created, and this goes as directly as the precautionary rites will permit to the purified Emperor. The two are brought together in carefully prepared rites, and the Emperor becomes the repository of the sacred Rice Spirit. We should remember that the Emperor of the Daijō Sai is not an ordinary Emperor. He has stepped back two thousand years into the past and has become once more the sacred living Kami in whose magical person is enfolded the entire welfare of his people, their protection from evil, both human and superhuman, their representation before the Kami of Heaven and Earth, and above all their food. The transfer of the Sacred Rice Spirit to the person of the Sacred Emperor is the climax of a series of elaborate rites intended to protect and promote fertility. The creative primitive interest operative here was food. If the Sacred Emperor carried within himself the Food Spirit all was well. We have been speaking in terms of the thought and practice of primitive Japan. In the modern ceremonial survivals of the old rites, the earlier forms tend increasingly to take on symbolic and higher religious meanings. Yet if we wish to understand the Daijō Sai we must approach it from the

standpoint of the primitive philosophy of food outlined above.

But after all, this does not fully explain the Daijō Sai. Why the two simple dwellings of Old Japan built side by side, why the two ancient thrones, arranged as though some one had just gone away, or, perhaps, as though some one were expected, why the black and the white *sake*, why the black and the white lights? The food interest will not explain these. At several points in the earlier stages of the discussion the statement has been made that concealed in the Daijō Sai is the original Japanese enthronement ceremony. A recent study of some of the problems of the Daijō Sai by Mr. Bunkichi Horioka has produced an important interpretation of these primitive enthronement elements.<sup>1</sup> The main points can be quickly summarized.

We should remember in the first place the primitive Japanese fear of the contamination of death. This old attitude of fear, not of death itself, for in meeting death the Japanese have always shown a superior indifference, but a fear of the ceremonial impurity of death, has survived in strength even into the present. So strong was this aversion in old Japanese life, that when a death occurred the entire house was vacated and a new dwelling for the living built elsewhere. In the case of the Ruler this meant the abandonment of the old palace and the erection of a new one on a more or less distant spot. This necessitated the removal of the capital, and explains the practice of the founding of a new capital with each new ruler that we meet with in old Japan. In the days when the dwellings of the people were simple huts of bamboo such removal was a matter of only two or three days' time.

We should remember too, that the essence of the old succession rites was the transfer of the regalia emblems. With this data before us we are prepared to understand certain previously unintelligible elements of the Daijō Sai. In the primitive situation, at the death of a ruler the successor purified himself, went to the dwelling of the dead Em-

<sup>1</sup> Horioka, *Daijōe Shiki to Nampō Dosoku Shiken* (大嘗會式と南方土俗私見—"A Private View of the Daijōe Ceremonies and the Customs of the South Pacific").

peror, secured from the couch-throne the three sacred regalia, and carried them, after a second purification to a new dwelling which he had built for himself. The Daijō Sai dramatically re-enacts this primitive procedure. The Yuki Den stands for the dwelling of the dead Emperor, the Suki Den is the dwelling of the new Emperor. The couch in the former is the throne of the previous ruler, the couch in the latter is the throne of the successor. We can understand from this the presence of the black and the white lights, and the black and the white *sake*. There is an element of mourning on the one hand and rejoicing on the other. Thus we discover in the Daijō Sai the original Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies. Just how the enthronement element came to be merged with the food ritual element constitutes as yet an unsolved problem.

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